WAIFS & STRAYS

LADY BATTERSEA

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To Kate Grove
from her affectionate
old friend
Constance Battersea
Dec. 1921.

WAIFS AND STRAYS

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WAIFS & STRAYS

BY

(LADY BATTERSEA)

Battersea, Constance (de Rothschild)
" " Flower

LONDON
ARTHUR L. HUMPHREYS
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FOREWORD

THE following miscellaneous collection of Stories, Papers, and Addresses were written by me at different periods of my life; some of them dealing with those branches of public work in which I was specially interested, others touching upon moral or social questions, others again being, as it were, flowerets culled from wreaths which I laid in spirit upon the graves of our dear ones; whilst of the two little stories that here find a place, the one recalls in some feeble measure the glory of the beech woods covering the Chiltern Hills; the other those heavenly strains that Lady Hallé awoke from the strings of her magic Stradivarius.

CONSTANCE BATTERSEA.

Overstrand,
March, 1921.

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A BUCKINGHAMSHIRE STORY OF 1663.

CHAPTER I

IN LONDON

IT was in the year 1663, on a fine spring morning, that the gay and noisy thoroughfare of Drury Lane seemed a very Babel of voices to the ears of a quiet and sober gentleman, who, emerging from the archway of some narrow lane, turned into this, one of the principal streets of London.

The pedestrian was dressed in so sombre a coat, that he was most unlike the gay frequenters of the town, and yet his clothes were not cut according to the Puritan style of garment, but rather as befitting a country gentleman, who might not be willing or able to keep pace with the frequent changes of that capricious damsel, Fashion. He wore his hair long, and curled like the Cavaliers, but he disdained the fashionable periwig; his doublet was of an iron-grey cloth, with short cloak of still darker hue, yet there was no jewel on the shoulder, nor was there any

fine lace on the faultlessly clean collar and cuffs. But the sword that hung from his side was a good one, of Spanish steel, and the band which was belted round his waist was of fine workmanship. A high pointed Cavalier hat of the period, graced by a black plume, shaded his brow, and drooped over long clustering curls, which were soft and fair. The high leather boots proved that the pedestrian had been travelling but lately on horseback. He walked slowly, pausing every now and then to look at some passer-by, or to notice some fine building. Carriages there were none, as it was too early for the fashionable world to drive out in their coaches, and the sedan chairs were still in the courtyards, whilst their occupants were seated before their mirrors, concerned with the mysteries of the toilette.

Two youths, smartly dressed, were walking just in front of the sober-looking pedestrian, talking in loud, gay tones, and using all the jargon of the day. They were making a wager as to who should arrive first at the door of the theatre further down the street ; and, still busy with their wager, they set off running at a brisk pace. But a few minutes after the start a shrill scream was heard, and then voices raised in angry

altercation. Eager to learn the cause of this fray, the gentleman hastened his pace, and arrived at the door of the theatre in time to see the two gallants laughing heartily at a poor girl whose basket of oranges they had upset. The golden fruit was rolling in the mud. The gentleman, whose eye grew stern at the sight, picked some of the fruit up, and looked with pity at the stains. From the fruit his glance rose higher, until it met that of the orange-girl, and he saw that her cheek had reddened with vexation. Her brown hair had become loosened from the straw hat under which it had been tucked, and fell over her neck and face, almost concealing her features; but a pair of brilliantly blue saucy eyes, slightly clouded at that moment, seemed to be resting with some curiosity upon the new comer.

'You will not be able to find customers for these,' said the gentleman, holding up the stained oranges.

'They will have to go dirt-cheap, sir,' muttered the girl, with a pout.

The two gallants burst out laughing at the joke; but their merriment was suddenly stopped, for the gentleman, dealing a blow right and left, sent them staggering along the street.

'How now, sir?' cried one, returning with a discomfited appearance; 'from what country do you come, that you must needs quarrel with the first gentleman you meet? Your name, sir?'

'My name is John Howe,' was the answer; 'and take care that the country bumpkin does not call upon you to draw your sword.'

'Forbear, Mr. Howe, and you, Ned,' interposed the companion of Howe's questioner. 'What! taking up a quarrel for a common orange-wench. Learn, sir country gentleman, our better town manners,' and taking his friend's arm, he walked off superciliously, managing to strike Mr. Howe's sword in passing.

Howe, almost feeling as if he had made himself ridiculous, and fearing lest he might be mobbed by a London crowd, looked cautiously around him, and then bade the orange-girl follow him at some little distance.

Retracing his steps down the magnificent street of palaces, Drury Lane, he turned back to a humbler thoroughfare, and soon stopped at the door of a gabled five-story mansion. He entered the dwelling, passed some loungers in the passage,

went up the steep stairs, and pushing open an oak door, walked into a large wainscoted room. It was littered with papers, books, and a travelling-case containing a suit of clothes, and fire-arms.

Howe opened the window and leant out. The soft spring air came gently in, waving his fair curls upon his shoulders. At the same time he heard a light step on the stairs, and a voice from below calling out, 'What, you here? may I ask who wants you, saucy baggage?' Then a gay laugh, a tap at the door, and before he had time to speak, the young orange-girl stood before him.

'Do you want me, sir? For here I am,' she said, and smiled. It was the rarest smile he had ever seen; her lips began it, her dimples caught it up, and it went straight into her blue eyes: their very glance was a smile.

Howe did not know whether this strange creature was beautiful or not; he only knew that she could smile as no other woman could. Howe was an artist, and he was longing to transfer that smile to canvas.

'Sure, sir, and have you looked enough?' asked the damsel unblushingly, with her arms around her basket, and her old brown cloak falling away from her throat.

'Yes—that is, no—I mean—I want to have a good look,' said Howe, confused, 'a good look at the spoilt fruit—I will pay you for them. What is your name?'

'Nell Gwynn, the orange-girl of the theatre. Bless you! I am as well known as the actresses. But I am not going to sell you this trash. You have done me a good turn by punishing those gallants this morning; I will do you another.'

'And pray what may that be?' asked the astonished artist.

'By advising you how to behave in London streets, if you would fare well.'

Howe laughed outright. 'Well,' he said, 'will you indeed do me a good turn? then sit to me for your picture—there, just as you are now, with your merry face and faded cloak, and that bright brown hair tumbling about you.'

'Indeed, sir, I will; but one favour I will ask: if you let me sit, you must let me talk, for I am fond of a chatter.'

'Talk away to your heart's content,' said Howe, taking out his paper and pencils, and absorbing himself in his work.

'And shall I really look like a picture?' said Nell, delightedly; 'but I don't quite see how.'

'Why not?'

'Why, the pictures of all the ladies, are they not smirking pink and white creatures with low bodices, showing their necks and shoulders too, and with curls hanging down to their waists, and with a rose in their hair? And don't they all look just alike?'

'Why, Nell, where have you made these studies of art? I mean, where have you seen these pictures?'

Then Nell grew confidential.

'At times, sir, I'm an orange-girl, at times I'm a flower-girl. I go to the door of the theatres, which, bless His Gracious Majesty, have been opened again and are doing bravely. When I'm a flower-girl I go to the mighty proud ladies, and I bring them a fresh nosegay. Well, sir, in the house of Lady Castlemaine I saw the pictures hanging, and I know how they look.'

'And is Lady Castlemaine so very beautiful?'

Nell laughed out aloud at this.

'You must go to the play-house tomorrow night,' she said, 'and you'll see them all, and me also—but I shall be at the doorway. Sir, I'm hungry.'

Howe seemed equal to the emergency. He opened a cupboard, produced a homely

loaf of bread, filled a flagon with sack, and placed the food and drink before Nell. The girl munched her bread, drank off her sack, and enjoyed her meal to the utmost. She ate on in silence, then suddenly starting to her feet came rapidly to Howe's side, with the glass in her hand: 'Sir, you must drink too, or who knows but you may be poisoning me?' and she leant over the canvas. But at sight of the sketch, incomplete, but like the original, and therefore graceful and bewitching, Nell was thrilled with delight.

'Am I so pretty?' she said, blushing.

'As much prettier, Nell, as God's handiwork is better than man's. You are more beautiful than this sketch. He took the glass gravely from her hand, and putting his lips to it, said, 'Your health, child.'

'Bless you, sir, wish me something else, for I have my health good from one year to another. Wish me——'

'Well, child, what?'

'Wish me a velvet train, and a real diamond ring, and a white horse to ride on in the Mall,—and—a gay cavalier to hold my stirrups, and——'

'And a great deal of care instead of a smile. Oh, Nell, what a dismal change! Child, you are too fair and too winning to

spend all your life selling fruit to gay folks of the town: you are too true and honest to wear silk and velvet when you own them not.'

'But I shall have a good right to wear them when I am an actress, as I mean to be, and a good one, too.'

'An actress!' said Howe, with astonishment.

'And why not, sir? I vow I could beat all those impudent hussies at their own game.'

''Tis not a fair life,' said the country gentleman, looking slightly vexed. 'Nay, you should leave your haunts for the country, turn milkmaid or farming wench; marry an honest man.'

'Nay, nay,' cried the girl, her cheeks reddening; 'I mean to be an actress, and to act "Celia" in the *Custom of the Country*. Shouldn't I stamp through the jig bravely, and shouldn't I queen it over my lover, the ploughboy! Sir, I could make the people laugh till they split; and I'm not sure that I couldn't make them cry too.'

'But, Nell, you cannot dance jigs and act for ever; 'tis not a seemly life. What will you do when you grow older?'

'Play at cards and cheat like the great

ladies; go to the play and laugh and yawn, have supper parties and drink wine, as they do.'

'For shame, Nell! Listen to me, and I will give thee good counsel, whilst thou art yet so fresh and fair. Leave the great folk, who will pull thee down into the mud; and cleave to those who will help to keep thee good and true. Be the sweetest flower in a poor man's garden, not the flower to be thrown away by the serving folks of the rich. See, child, this is my name and address. When thou wantest help, come to me, and thou shalt get it.'

As Nell Gwynn took the slip of paper offered her by the artist, there was an agitated tremble of her lip, and a tear started to her blue eye.

'Sir, I shall never forget you,' she said, with a sob in her voice; 'no one has ever spoken so to me till this day.'

Then Nell relapsed into silence. The artist painted on for some time, but at last he laid his drawing carefully aside, opened his travelling-case, drew forth a purse, and placed some money in the girl's hand.

'That is for the oranges, for your patience in sitting, and for your prattle, child.'

'It's too much for all three,' said Nell,

smiling; 'and I ought to give you some more prattle to make it right. May I ask, sir, where you come from?'

'From Buckinghamshire, my child; from the county of Oliver Cromwell and of Hampden.'

'Hush!' said Nell, with her finger on her lip; 'they were traitors,—God save the King! Do you stay in London, sir?'

'Only a short while. But when I go to the play-house I shall look for you, Nell: mind you stand near the doorway, so that I may have a talk.'

Nell smiled, showed a row of gleaming teeth, called out, 'At the King's play-house, Whitehall,' and, with her basket on her arm, left the artist alone in the wainscoted room. A great golden ray of sunlight clung to her shabby cloak, and seemed to follow her out, leaving Howe in cool shadow. He sat for a moment, musing over his morning's work, and then, taking a folded paper from his pocket, glanced at some carefully written names and addresses.

'Mr. Evelyn may detain me,' he said; 'I will first go to him.' He descended the stairs, and making his way along the now crowded streets, passed into the Strand, and then walked on in the direction of the river,

which seemed just at that moment the gayest, merriest thoroughfare of the city.

John Howe, the Buckinghamshire gentleman, had lived until now a quiet, retired life, devoting himself to his art, though in a shy and half-bashful way—knowing that the Puritans looked upon art and all things of beauty as the work of the devil. Howe's home among the beech woods was in dangerous vicinity to Chequers Court and to Hampden's home. But the rebel chiefs had proved loyal neighbours, and Mistress Patience Howe, the artist's wife, was a Puritan's daughter, dressed in grey, and ruffled up to the throat. So Howe, despite his flowing curls and graceful dress, had been left undisturbed by the leaders of the Commonwealth. Some say that in the old days he had fought along with the Ironsides ; at all events, when King Charles II. ascended his lawful throne, and the people went mad with loyal transports, Howe was accused of being at heart a Cromwellite. Mistress Patience was hooted at in the market, the artist's orchard had been robbed, his flowers stolen, his fields trodden under. He was even advised to leave the place, lest he be burnt out of house and home.

Now in truth John Howe was of that

pliant, soft nature which could by turns sympathise with Royalist and with Republican. His devotion to art, his appreciation of the beautiful, his delight in colour and grace, attracted him towards the throne of the Stuarts ; but his God-fearing, upright character, his sober tastes, his sense of decorum, and last, but greatest of all, his love for his wife, drew him strongly towards the Puritans. Men distrusted him, not unnaturally, fearing this twofold nature ; and neither Royalists nor Puritans admitted him fearlessly to their ranks.

Two children, Rupert and Gilbert, boys of fourteen and ten years of age, brightened with their happy presence the artist's home. Rupert was a high-spirited, courageous youth, who could ill brook an insult or a taunt from the village people,—things of too common occurrence. In order to spare him daily pain, his father had determined upon sending him from home.

In days gone by, when the artist was a shy and industrious youth, he had known the gentle, pensive Evelyn, and had even taken the picture of Evelyn's beautiful wife. Evelyn was interested in the promising youth, and bade him return to Wotton at some future day, and claim old acquaintance.

Years had passed since then, but Howe had not forgotten the friendly words. The day had come, and Howe rode down to Wotton to seek the good man and faithful Royalist.

As he entered the park gates, and cantered along the shady avenue, he fell to musing upon the reception he might receive from the owner of Wotton. Glancing onwards towards the house, his eye brightened at the sight of a pleasant group seated on the smooth and sweeping lawn. A man of middle age beside a fair and stately lady: fresh and rosy girls tying up a nosegay of spring flowers: romping lads engaged in a wild game of hide-and-seek.

Howe dismounted, and, leading his horse by the bridle, walked slowly up to the door. Meantime the boys had perceived his approach, and hastened to meet the mounted stranger, and to give his horse in charge of the serving men.

'Might I speak with Mr. Evelyn?' said John Howe to the fair-haired child who stood before him.

'My father is on the lawn,' answered the boy, courteously; 'nay, he is coming towards us. Father, here is one who would speak with you.'

'Sir, do you remember John Howe?'

'Why, of course I do!—the artist, my friend, who painted this face of mine, and a far worthier one—that of my wife.' So saying, Evelyn extended his hand towards his visitor, and bade him be welcome in the kindest and friendliest manner. 'We have both grown older since then,' he added, with a smile; 'and these are all new faces to you,' he said, looking round upon the children.

'And I,' said Howe, 'have two sons at home.'

Evelyn now introduced his guest to his wife and daughters, and they soon fell to talking with him and asking him all manner of questions. He told them about his wife and his home and his children, and how Rupert, his eldest-born, was longing to leave Wendover, for the child was a Royalist, heart and soul, bent upon one day serving the King.

'Send me your little son,' said Mr. Evelyn, kindly; 'he shall con his lessons with my Eustace. And our learned Dominie Sampson shall make him a true scholar; and as he grows older he may find means of serving the King to his heart's content.'

Howe's heart leaped with delight.

'Yes, in truth, I meant it,' said Evelyn.

'Eustace, my eldest son, is a child who longs for a playfellow of his own age. These two urchins are too young for him.'

'I will be a good mother to him,' said Mistress Evelyn, kindly; 'tell your wife not to fear.'

'My thanks are poor indeed for such goodness,' said Howe, deeply touched. 'The boy will not be ungrateful, Mr. Evelyn: he has a tender heart, and the taunts and insults of the townspeople, who look upon us as Puritans, vex him every day.'

'Rupert must wear long curls, and a dainty doublet,' quoth Mistress Evelyn; 'he must hawk and hunt, and be able to dance a measure; he must speak French, and not mind a jest; then he will be a Royalist, fit for Whitehall.'

'He must learn to wield his pen better than his sword,' added her husband, quickly; 'to be true as steel, courageous and gentle, discreet and ready; then the little one will be a gentleman, and may serve His Majesty: for of such temper should be the gentlemen of England. But tell me, Howe, has your brush been busy lately?'

'Yesterday I attempted a sketch, light indeed, but it would please me if it were half as winning as the original.'

'And who may that original be? What court beauty has been sitting to you?'

'No court beauty, Mr. Evelyn, but an orange-girl, who sells flowers and fruit before the king's play-house in Whitehall; a laughing, dimpled maiden, with cheeks like dewy roses, and a merry Irish tongue.'

'Nell Gwynn—and no other.'

'Nell Gwynn, Mr. Evelyn, the very same. You know her?'

'Know her! I should think so: the whole town knows her—a saucy, laughing orange-wench, who bandies jokes with the King's court, who would bandy them with His Gracious Majesty himself, if he would let her. But how came you, a quiet, sober, country gentleman, to get such a model to sit for you?'

Howe related in a few words the events of his first morning in London, and there was much merriment on the part of his hearers. The evening which Howe spent at Wotton was so happy that he was easily induced to remain with his kind hosts until the following day. It was with a light heart that he mounted his horse on the next morning, and rode away from the hospitable house, breathing blessings upon the roof that was to shelter his son.

CHAPTER II

THE KING'S PLAY-HOUSE

As our traveller rode back into London, he bethought himself of how he should spend the evening, and he resolved to go to the King's play-house, to see one of those performances which had only just been allowed to recommence.

The Puritans' iron rule had weighed heavily upon the land. As they clad themselves in black and grey, so they wished the whole country to wear a leaden hue; had sternly cut down the Maypoles, forbidden dancing, sports, merry-makings, jovial gatherings, and, above all, plays. Unfortunate actors had been hooted out of every town; and actresses had been tied to the pillory, whipped, imprisoned, and well-nigh extirpated. Merry England was merry England no longer; a quotation from Ben Jonson or Shakespeare set a fatal mark upon him who made it; a song, if not a hymn, was a profanity; and the music of the viol or spinnet had been declared to belong to the abominations of the Evil One.

Howe's youth had been spent under that

strict rule; and it was only owing to his joyous artist nature that he had retained some secret sympathy with those mundane delights which he had tasted in France and Italy.

It was with no small thrill of expectation that, a short hour later, Howe left his dwelling-place and proceeded along the road which led direct to Whitehall. He had dressed himself with care, and had tried to vie with the graceful Royalists of the day, who wore their pointed hats jauntily on their curls. Whitehall was thronged with people, coaches were lumbering down the road, sedan chairs were being rapidly borne along, pedestrians were following one another in quick succession, whilst the sun was still high in the heavens and the spring day not near its close.

'And is it *Macbeth* you are coming to see played, sir?' asked a fresh young voice at Howe's elbow.

As he turned he beheld Nell Gwynn among the crowd. She was radiant with smiles, and her basket, which hung lightly upon her round white arm, was piled with violets and spring flowers.

'You have kept your word, sir,' laughed Nell. 'Now see what I will do for you.

Stand here beside the pillar (never mind my old cloak, it won't hurt your brave one), and listen to me.'

'Why, Nell, I have come to see the play, not to listen to you; to hear what a great poet said, if *Macbeth* is really going to be played.'

'Do you doubt my word, sir? Then ask the first comer; but there is plenty of time for the play, so stop here and look.'

Hustled on one side by an advancing group, Howe allowed some chair-carriers to pass him.

'Look, sir!' Nell exclaimed. 'There goes the Duke of Albemarle, a right brave gentleman; and there is my Lord Sandwich and my Lord of Rochester; and yonder is Mr. Pepys, the gayest of all, with a kind word for every one; and there, sir, is the smartest gentleman of the Court, the great favourite, His Grace the Duke of Buckingham.'

'What Nell, sweet Nell,—where art hiding, child? Bring me a posy for the loveliest lady.'

It was Buckingham's voice. Nell Gwynn hastened from her retreat.

'Are you hiding among the violets, girl?' said His Grace, laughingly.

'Until the sunshine of your presence calls me forth,—that is to say, the sheen of your diamonds,' said Nell, who had caught the jargon of the day. 'But for whom is the posy?' she said, archly.

'For the fairest lady here,' cried Buckingham, as a female form stepped from her sedan chair. He was by her side in a moment, handing her the flowers.

'Mrs. Steward, as I live!' whispered Nell; 'and who follows her but my Lady Castlemaine!'

As this celebrated beauty appeared, clad in a yellow sack, with her fair curls crowned with jewels, the bystanders drew back for a moment, and Howe was able to see the intense scorn with which the rival beauties eyed one another.

'Nell, Nell! where are our flowers? called out some gay voices. There was the Duke of York, the King's brother, and the Duke of Monmouth, with his bright handsome face, then more lords and ladies, sparkling with jewels;—the ladies, however, dressed with so little regard to decency, that Howe blushed for them.

''Tis a tiresome play we have come to see,' said one panting beauty. 'Why don't they give us *The Mad Lovers* or *The Custom*

of the Country? Will Shakespeare may have suited the days of Queen Bess, but we want a little wit and fun nowadays.'

'Then you should write the plays yourself, ma'am,' said a tall gentleman with bright eager eyes.

'What, you here, Sir Peter Lely? When am I to sit for my picture?'

'Not till I have finished painting Her Most Gracious Majesty.'

'Then, Sir Peter, you had better hasten with that good brush of yours, for my face will bear you the greater honour of the two.'

'The impertinent hussy!' quoth Nell; 'tis Mrs. Mallet herself, whom men call the Beauty of the South. But who comes here? His Most Gracious Majesty!'

At these words, which were shouted from one to another, a rush forward ensued, which carried Nell Gwynn up to the very entrance of the house.

A sedan chair, borne by four men, and escorted by seven or eight attendant pages, all magnificently attired, now appeared in front of the doorway, and Charles II. issued from his satin and curtained seat. Dressed entirely in rose-coloured velvet, with a white cloak embroidered with silver, lace ruffles, lace collar, and breast-knot of eme-

ralds and diamonds, the King seemed determined in his own person to bring back all the magnificence of foreign courts. His face was bronzed with travel, his skin was of a pale olive, his periwig, which fell in ringlets far below his shoulders, was of the blackest jet. His features, plain in themselves, were lighted up by a singularly gay and winning expression, and his eyes revealed a hidden depth of humour. His weak, restless mouth and receding chin were, however, indicative of wavering purpose, unbridled passions, and undignified merriment. Right in the King's way stood the flower-girl.

'Flora herself!' said the merry monarch, taking some violets from the basket. 'The spring flowers are all here, but the roses are in your cheeks, girl, and the forget-me-nots in your eyes.'

Nell blushed with delight.

'Sure, Your Majesty, and I hope not,' quoth she, quickly.

'And why not, Nell?'

'Because it is dew that makes flowers fresh and sweet, and I want no tears.'

The King laughed. He delighted in repartee.

'Smiles then shall be the dew, Nell,' said he, tossing her a coin. 'Come always

to the play-house, do you hear, girl?' he added, in a lower voice.

Nell heard, but receded rapidly, for many were pressing round the King. Howe was close to her, astonished at what he had heard.

'How soft the velvet was!' said Nell delightedly. 'I smoothed His Majesty's coat—and how the jewels sparkled!'

Within the play-house rang the words of the great poet, and they who listened and yawned and tittered and chattered during the performance, were silenced at the entrance of the King, who seated himself by the side of Lady Castlemaine. Howe was one of the spectators.

'I had sooner,' he thought, 'hear Will Shakespeare read in the beech woods at home than acted in the King's play-house.'

Upon rising on the following morning, Howe's glance fell upon the sketch of Nell Gwynn, and he resolved to put a few finishing touches to it. The girl's face and figure were still vivid enough in his memory to make him wish to transfer them to the canvas, so he set to work with hearty goodwill, and worked so long and patiently that the result was better than he could have hoped for. To be sure, it was now too late

to start for Buckinghamshire, but the day had been well spent; and early on the following morning, before the sun had risen over the Thames, Howe was seated upon his sturdy horse, riding northwards. It was late in the same afternoon that Howe rode along the brow of the Chiltern Hills, passed through the busy town of Wendover, and cantered along under an arching avenue of bright fresh beech, from which he emerged to ride up to a pretty, low-roofed, straggling Elizabethan dwelling. A smooth plot of grass lay like an emerald in front of the house, some dark yews screened a terrace walk, and a further glimpse revealed a garden where spring had just begun to cast her gay mantle upon the black flower-beds. Two little rosy-cheeked boys came rushing through the open doorway to meet their father. Hardly had he disengaged himself from their embrace, when he turned to receive the welcome of Mistress Patience herself, who, dressed in softest grey, with a dainty ruff about her throat, stood out in the twilight, against the purple shadows of the parting day.

'Patience, dear wife,' quoth Howe, 'what say you? Our little Rupert is to serve the King; and Mr. Evelyn—the great, good

Mr. Evelyn—will be his guardian in London.'

'He will want one there, in that Babylon,' answered the Puritan wife, sadly. 'John, must the child go?'

The shadows had crept into her eyes. Howe led her back into the house, and, Royalist as he was, he blessed the high ruff and modest dress of Mistress Patience.

CHAPTER III

IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

THE mother grieved and fretted over the departure of her eldest-born, but the child himself was most eager to go. London! what an enchanting picture the word called forth! what a bright medley of magnificent cavaliers, gay ladies, coaches, horses, plays, dancing, masks—in fact, of all and everything that he had dreamt of in his quiet little chamber at home!

Rupert, gifted with the beauty of his mother, had inherited his father's nature. Gilbert, the second and younger child (a boy of ten), was a bright-eyed, sober little youth; and Patience, in her heart of hearts, hoped

that his character and disposition might in some way resemble that of her own father, who had been celebrated in all the country round for his sagacity, his justice, and his moderation.

Her fondest love was for the spoilt Rupert; her admiration and hopes were centred in Gilbert. On the following morning after his return, Howe presented his eldest son with a small sword, and taking him into his large but scantily-furnished room, gave him his first lesson in the great art of fencing. Rupert was delighted. He threw himself into the new and fascinating study with the greatest ardour. But he was suddenly arrested by the sight of a long roll of canvas, which was propped up against his father's easel, and was tempting enough to induce the youth to take a peep.

'Why, father,' said the child, curiously, 'when did you paint that pretty maiden?'

'In London, Rupert.'

'What is she, father?—she holds a basket in her hand.'

'Ay, child, she is a flower-girl, who stands at the door of His Majesty's play-house.'

'The play-house, father! Oh, I am longing to see a play acted!'

'But, Rupert, you must work hard, and be a brave boy, and not think only of plays and merry-makings.'

'You know, father,' said the child, 'that I shall try to be a good swordsman. Old Martin says that my riding is very fair, and I can now vault into the saddle like a Cavalier. Fencing you must teach me, and for pistol-shot and quarter-staff I can go to the hostelry; as for hawking and hunting, the citizens of Wendover are not good at that; and dancing I must leave altogether. If mother would only show me the step of the minuet——'

Howe laughed outright.

'Anything more, my little scholar?'

'Oh, yes!' quoth Master Rupert; 'I must learn the great bow, the French walk, the Court language, the heraldry, the title of the lords, the way to address a lady.'

'Rupert, my boy,' said Howe, 'it will come in time, as long as you do not learn too many things in London that will require unlearning. But pay good heed to Mr. Evelyn; he wishes you to be a scholar.'

'I think I'd rather be a Cavalier,' said the child.'

'And a good Cavalier should be a right scholarly gentleman; only follow Mr.

Evelyn's words, and perhaps thou may'st become a page of the King's.'

The lesson in swordsmanship now proceeded vigorously. It came, however, to a somewhat untimely end, for the master and his pupil were disturbed by no less a person than Mistress Patience. She carried an open letter in her hand.

'Dear husband,' she said, with a hurried and agitated voice, 'I have news from my brother.'

Howe stopped, and asked anxiously, 'Has he gained Holland? Is he safe?'

'Alas! no, he could not start upon his journey, it was too perilous. He is suspected of treason, and has retraced his steps. Our enemies have accused him of conspiracy, and Randall is on his way here.'

'Here!' exclaimed Howe, his dark eye kindling, his brow lowering; 'to make our house like a nest of hornets, to make men say in truth that we are Puritans!—here, to harbour sedition, to induce this disloyal county to rise again, to give hopes to the old Covenanters, to make our name accursed! Patience, I will not receive Randall within these walls.'

'What, not dear Uncle Randall?' exclaimed the little Gilbert, from behind his

mother's skirts; 'he was so good to us, father!'

'He has been a traitor to the King,' exclaimed Howe.

'Then he is no uncle of ours,' said little Rupert, sword in hand.

'Children,' quoth the mother, sternly, 'go to what befits you better than mixing in the talk of your elders;' and the boys left the room, strangely agitated, but silenced. 'Nay, Howe, hear me,' she said as they departed; 'you know that Randall's land and wealth have tempted his enemies to inform against him, and once branded as a traitor those infamous judges would swear him to be the archfiend himself. Alas, for the days of the Commonwealth, when my father dealt justice in the land.'

'The Roundheads swept the Cavaliers' coffers pretty clean, Patience, and left not their dwellings with much provender. Nay, child, we will not begin the old strife. I wooed thee as Patience Randall, the Puritan's daughter,—thou hast wedded one poor John Howe, a Royalist,' and the light-hearted artist smiled. But the Puritan wife had no responsive smile.

'John,' she said, 'this night when the clock is upon the stroke of eleven, my brother

Randall will be at the foot of the hill which rises from Wendover town, *and I shall meet him.*'

'You, Patience?'

'I shall meet him, and tell him from you that within these walls he need fear no treachery, and that we are true as steel, and, as of old, loyal-hearted; and that, in grateful remembrance of the days when he and his followers saved us from the fury of the Ironsides, we shall save him from the venomous tongues of these creatures of the King's law.' Patience pressed her lips to her husband's hand, and stood silent before him.

'So be it, wife,' said Howe, as usual under the dominion of the master-mind; 'but thy brother's coming must hasten thy son's departure.'

'What meanest thou?'

'Rupert will leave to-morrow for Wotton, with Martin as his trusty squire.'

So the father's lessons in the art of swordsmanship were ended.

That night Rupert heard from his mother's lips that he was to leave her on the following morning; he then received from his father's hands a letter, directed to Mr. Evelyn, the small sword, a little pistol, and a new snow-white plume for his felt hat.

His mother gave him a hymn-book in a dark cover, and a miniature of herself, with a lock of her hair and of Gilbert's in the back of the frame. Then the artist walked with Martin to the stables, looked at the child's pony to see that it was strong and in good condition, and gave Martin special instructions concerning the journey. Rupert and Gilbert, awed by all these preparations, sat quietly in the oaken chamber, until Mistress Patience brought them their supper, and bade them eat and be of good cheer. She, good woman, had tears in her eyes, and a sob in her voice, and as she bent over Rupert and touched one of his silken curls, her tears flowed freely. When she had left the chamber, the children talked soberly over their supper, and at last, when they went to their sleeping-chamber, they clung to one another and moaned in their sleep.

It was a dark night, but Mistress Patience knew no fear. As the clock struck eleven, she wrapped herself in her thick mantle, with its black hood, and issuing quietly from the house, sped lightly along, descending the steep hill, within but one turn of Wendover town, and then suddenly halting near a spreading beech, she called in low tones,—

'Randall! Randall!'

'Patience, good sister!' came the answer, and she felt herself firmly held in the arms of a stalwart form. 'But I come as a hunted fox, who knows not where to lay his head. Say, will John Howe grant me shelter?'

'His wife will,' answered Patience, readily; 'but not within the house, brother; it is not well on account of the children. People suspect us already, in spite of Rupert's leaving to-morrow to serve the King.'

'I would, my sister, he were going to serve an elect of the Lord, and not that vain, foolish prince, in whom no righteous person should put his trust.'

'Hush, Randall! do not speak treason or His Majesty. Although John's heart has gone forth to the Lord's anointed,' said Patience, sternly, 'he will help thee, Randall; but thou must promise secrecy and discretion.'

'Our day will come again, sister; if not here, in that great new country whither the *Mayflower* sailed with those who suffered in the reign of Stuart's father.'

'Hush! hush! Randall, I entreat——'

'Sister, I am faint and weary; take me where I may have shelter and food.'

'I have myself prepared a chamber for thee in the old Hermitage, a dismantled part of the house, where nought can surprise or disturb thee; it is in the farthest end of the garden, and there thou shalt partake of food and drink.'

'A very lair of a wild animal,' said Randall, grimly, at the same time following upon Mistress Patience's steps.

As she ascended the hill and stepped along under the beech avenue, her heart misgave her, for might she not be bringing ruin upon herself and husband? But she drew her hand within her brother's, and led him dexterously along a somewhat covered, tangled pathway, arriving at last at a half-hidden door. Patience turned a rusty key in the lock, and entered a stone hall which led into a small room. Loving hands had struggled with the defects of the chamber. The light of a lamp hanging from the ceiling brought into relief a table spread with a wholesome and inviting supper, and allowed the eye to rest upon the white curtains of a bed, a modern settle, and the fresh green rushes on the floor. The lamp also illumined the white cheeks and red eyes of Mistress Patience, and the dark and close-shaven face of her brother. Randall had the cropped

hair of the Puritans of the time, his eyes were singularly piercing and eager, his face pale and somewhat careworn ; but a look of indomitable energy, common to brother and sister, set the mark of kinship upon the pair.

'Patience, thou art sad,' exclaimed Randall, regarding her face by the struggling light ; 'how my sweet, rosy-cheeked sister is changed !' It was his first word of affection, and Patience burst into tears.

'What ! is that smooth-tongued John Howe an unkind husband to thee ? Then indeed——'

'Nay, nay, brother,' exclaimed Patience, her tears flowing freely, 'John Howe is lover and husband both, a true and loyal gentleman ; but my heart is weak, and I have strange misgivings——'

'Say rather thy faith is weak, Patience.'

'Well, be it so, if thou likest ; and Rupert, the child, leaves me to-morrow. Good Randall, I must bid thee good-night. Rest well—I will return in the morning.' But she still clung affectionately to him. 'And,' added she, in a whisper, 'forget us not in thy prayers.'

'Stay, Patience, and pray with me,' said the Puritan, uncovering his head and kneeling on the bare ground.

'My prayers will be said by the child's pillow,' said Patience; 'and may they be accepted by God!'

'Amen,' quoth Randall; and as he turned towards his sister, she had vanished from him, and was speeding back to her own dwelling. John Howe was awaiting her on the doorstep.

'Patience,' he said, 'may we not regret sheltering thy brother!'

She did not answer, but ascended the steps and softly entered the chamber where the children slept.

. . . . .

The parting was over. Rupert's April tears had flowed quickly, his merry dark eyes had been clouded with grief, he had clung to his mother's neck, and to Gilbert's tiny hand, and very nearly lost heart for the coming ride. But his father promised to accompany him upon the first stage of his journey, and somewhat consoled, Rupert mounted his pony. Sitting erect in his saddle, with his fair curls blowing round his shoulders and his cheeks flushed with excitement, he looked the cavalier from head to foot. Behind him, old Martin was mounted upon his huge steed, the trusty

squire of his little master. The pony trotted off, Rupert doffed his felt hat, and then bent his head low down upon the pony's mane, to hide the gush of tears which he could not repress.

John Howe, meanwhile, pressed his wife's cold hand. 'Weep not, Patience,' he said; 'good Mr. Evelyn will be a kind and trusty friend to our boy. Wotton is safer than Wendover. Bid Randall not leave his retreat.' Therewith he vaulted into the saddle, and the three equestrians set forth upon their journey.

Patience stood in the porch-way with her gaze riveted upon the quickly lessening figures of the travellers; her hands hung listlessly at her side, and a tear stole down her pale cheek. Her child's voice awoke her from this reverie.

'Mother, where is Uncle Randall?'

It was little Gilbert who spoke.

'What meanest thou, child?' said Patience, colouring violently.

'Bridget said that Uncle Randall had come back. Is it true, mother?'

Patience was truthfulness itself. 'It is true.'

'Is he here, dear mother?'

'Not in this house, my son.'

'But near here? I want to see him, mother. Uncle Randall gave me a song-book; I have it now.'

'Gilbert, Uncle Randall is in the Hermitage, hiding from bad men. Should you see him, mention his presence here to no one.'

'Not even if I am asked, mother?' said the child.

'You will not be asked,' said Patience, shortly; and taking Gilbert by the hand, she walked by a circuitous path to the Hermitage. Her gentle tap at the closed door met with a quick response. Randall was awaiting her, but he did not expect the child, and at the sight of him his face softened.

'Gilbert?' he asked.

'Yes, Uncle Philip, I am Gilbert. Rupert has just gone to Wotton, to Mr. Evelyn.'

'That child is like our father, Patience. May he grow up true to the faith.'

'Gilbert is a true and loyal boy,' answered the mother, her thoughts still clinging to the absent one; 'but he is not nobler than Rupert, whom may God shield in His mercy.'

'Nay, do not take the Lord's name so

lightly,' quoth the Puritan; ''tis one of the evil propensities of the Cavaliers.'

'If His name is in our hearts, it must rise perforce to our lips. Do not cavil, brother. And now tell me what are thy plans. Not, I am sure, to remain like a caged lion in thy den.'

Randall smiled. 'Thou knowest me of old, good sister. Listen: I have friends in Princes Risborough, in Wendover, and in Wycombe. To-night they meet me in the woods of Hampden; to-morrow I have a meeting with some others of the elect, near the city of Oxford; upon the third day I return to thee, and, after another night or two spent in this hiding-place, shall start for Scotland, in order to carry out the plans entrusted to me.'

'Randall, be prudent, and do not conspire against the King's Majesty; the doom of the traitor is a fearful one.'

'I do not conspire,' answered Randall; 'but I will put in safety those who have given me their trust, and I myself will lead the second band of pilgrims who follow the fortune of the *Mayflower*. Child, wilt come with us?'

Gilbert blushed. 'It is a long, hard way, uncle.'

'It is across the sea to a new land, where there is no king.'

Gilbert shook his head. 'No,' said he, quietly, 'Rupert may want me at Wotton.'

'What, another Royalist!' quoth Randall.

Meanwhile Patience had pulled a purse from her pocket and began to press it upon Randall, knowing that his need must be great. But Randall, of a stern, self-denying nature, would not take the gold.

'It is not thine, it is thy husband's,' he said, curtly. 'Keep it for the day of need.'

At last the brother and sister parted. Gilbert went away pondering over the strange speech and peculiar voice of his uncle, which were formed upon the exact pattern of those whom he looked upon as the elect of the Lord, and which during the last reign had been greatly in vogue. As Gilbert climbed the steps which led to his chamber, he was met by the housekeeper, Bridget.

'And so,' quoth this dignitary, 'the Puritan gentleman is in hiding here. I will bake him some cakes myself, and you shall take them to him. Why, bless me, child. we were all Puritans and saints of the Lord

once; but times are changed, and now we are all precious sinners.'

Gilbert, for an answer, bade Bridget hear him say the last song he had learned. The 'song' was a hymn, and Mistress Bridget, after listening to one verse, returned to her cakes.

CHAPTER IV

A RIDE OVER THE CHILTERN HILLS

WHAT so inspiriting as a ride upon a lovely spring morning, when earth and sky are glittering in early dew and sunshine, when the air is sweet with fragrance and gay with the voices of the birds? What so glorious as a ride on the brow of a wooded hill, with a distant view stretching away into the blue horizon—a view suggestive as the future shrouded in mystery, and therefore full of hope? Rupert's eyes sparkled, his cheeks flushed, and his heart seemed to keep time and tune with that great pulse of nature throbbing around him. The artist temperament which he inherited from his father made him likewise keenly alive to the sights and sounds which met him at every step.

'My child,' said Howe, 'how beautiful are our Chiltern Hills! Where can we breathe purer air? Where find such noble trees? It is a glorious line of hills, and overlooks a county which will be famous in history. Ay, for it was there that Cromwell, Ireton, and Hampden lived.'

'Puritans!' exclaimed Rupert.

'Yes, Puritans, my boy,—often cruel, often wicked, often wrong, but men who fought for liberty and gained the prize.'

'And yet, father, you bid me serve the King.'

'The King has been restored by the people, but His Majesty must respect their liberty, gained by the men who trod this ground. Ah! methinks there is a breath of freedom about this county which will never be tainted, and it is dearer to me than any other. And now we are arriving at the true and loyal town of Berkhampstead, and at the hostelry of the "King's Crown" we will dismount and rest our horses.'

As the three entered the long and neatly-built town of Berkhampstead, men stood and gazed upon the travellers, whilst at the hostelry they were received with most affectionate solicitude.

'Master Howe,' exclaimed the landlord,

who was officiously helping the artist to alight, 'you are a likelier guest than those who have passed our doors this morning.'

'And who may they be?'

'Men who look like Roundheads, and who bode no good.'

Howe paled. 'Whither go they?'

'I heard to Oxford, to meet one Master Randall; but that gentleman is followed by his Majesty's servants, and once caught, odds fish! there will be but one road for him, and that is to the Tower.'

'Master Randall is on his way to Holland,' quoth Howe. 'Rupert, go and look after thy pony: never forget thy horse, child.'

He pushed his hat impatiently from his head, and hummed a Cavalier song.

When the meal was ended, John Howe took the child in his arms, blessed him, and kissed him. His heart was aching, for Rupert was still a child, numbering but fourteen years, and it seemed hard to send him forth alone.

'Never fear, Master Howe,' said old Martin, 'thy son shall come to no harm. He will be safer away than at home. There are those abroad whose looks I like not,' he added in lower tones. 'Take heed, good master.'

'I know, I know, my honest Martin. Fare-thee-well, child, and may the Lord have thee in His keeping.'

And so the second parting ended.

The afternoon sun was gilding the distant landscape when John Howe bestrode his horse for his homeward ride; but he soon perceived that he had been watched, and it was not long before he was joined by some travellers, who seemed anxious to beguile the tedium of the journey by his company. Three men, dressed in a showy, tawdry manner, with all the exaggeration of the fashion of the day, but mounted upon poor, jaded-looking beasts, rode upon either side of John Howe, and doffing their hats, accosted him thus:

'Good-day, good sir. You seem to know this country well,' said the eldest of the three. 'Methinks you could tell us the way to Princes Risborough.'

'Methinks it is not unknown to you,' replied John Howe, with a smile, 'for your horses' heads are turned in the right direction; but your guess was a good one, as it happened: I do live in these parts.'

'Where I fear His Majesty is but ill honoured,' continued his interlocutor. 'Men say those Chiltern Hills and woods contain

hiding places for the Roundheads, and that many a Royalist manor gives shelter to a Puritan rebel.'

'It may be true,' answered John Howe, quietly. 'I know nought of these things, and can hardly suppose that gentlemen like you, of such fair and courteous mien, should be going abroad to search the country for some poor misguided wretch who, sooner or later, must fall by his own folly.'

'Not for one wretch, sir,' exclaimed the traveller, 'but for a whole nest of them; and methinks we shall find what we are looking for at Princes Risborough. Now, to show your good-will to the right cause, be one of us, sir, and onwards in the King's name!'

'Nay, nay,' said John Howe, 'you do me too much honour, and mistake my calling. I am no soldier in the service, no minister of the law, but a poor artist, living in peaceful retirement.'

'But nevertheless mounted, booted, spurred, and armed,' replied one of the men.

'Truly spoken,' answered John Howe. 'I have but just left my little son on the first stage of his journey to London, where he is going to serve the King, and do now ride back to my home.'

'Ask him his name,—'tis surely John

Howe,' so whispered one of the men to his companion.

'Art right! Grenville——'

'Good sir,' began one, who bore the name of Smith, 'may I ask if you know aught of one Master John Howe?'

'A little, a very little,' was the answer; 'but enough to enable me to present you to him whenever you may wish it.'

'I do wish it,—ay, demand it, for Master John Howe is accused of consorting with the Puritans, and I would fain give him friendly warning.'

'Then we will hasten to his dwelling. I myself will escort you, and you will have a safe and rapid ride; but as business awaits me before the setting of the sun, you must excuse our starting directly.'

No sooner said than done. John Howe spurred his horse, and bounded on at a quick and springing pace.

The three men, hardly prepared for so prompt a departure, did the same, and the party commenced flying along the highroad. But Howe suddenly checked his horse, and, without giving warning to his companions, turned rapidly to the left, and began to ascend the hill, which was crowned with beech woods.

'Your path is no easy one to follow,' said Smith, struggling up after him. His horse, and those of his companions, were beginning to pant and steam. Howe rode a vigorous, fresh animal, which enabled him to press rapidly forwards, which he did without paying the slightest heed to the distressed condition of the miserable beasts behind him.

'Hold! hold! good sir; we cannot keep pace with you,' said Smith, in breathless tones.

John Howe slightly checked his horse, giving it time to breathe, and so gained the ascent without difficulty. Then looking down upon his companions, he exclaimed merrily, 'In the King's name, onwards!' and dashed along through the beech wood, in and out of the trees, never relaxing his speed for one moment, a performance which was only possible to one so perfectly acquainted with the paths in the wood. Behind him sounded high and shrill the voices of his would-be companions.

'Hold! hold! good sir, I entreat of you, stop! Where are you leading us?—'Tis the devil's dance!—Oh, my horse, he is down! —You shall pay for this!—Oh, this accursed ride!' and then came a volley of oaths.

'If you halt not, we arrest you in the King's name.'

But on rode John Howe, faster and faster. A pistol shot sounded loud upon his ear, then another; they harmed him not. He doubled back into the woods, turned his horse's head, and began to descend the hill, concealed by the tangle of trees.

'Well done, good steed,' he said, patting his horse's neck, which was white with foam; 'and now back to Wendover to warn Patience.'

He had so completely outwitted and baffled his three companions, that he felt they would not be able to resume their pursuit; besides the twilight would render their path yet more difficult.

'I have a good start,' said he, spurring his horse, and not drawing rein until he saw Wendover town.

Gilbert was beneath the porch when he alighted. The child's eyes were red, he had been crying for his brother.

'Where is thy mother, my boy?'

'She is with Uncle Randall,' was the whispered answer; 'in the Hermitage, father. If you are going there, take me.'

'Nay, Gilbert, not now, but you shall be my little squire, and lead my good horse

to the stables; he has carried me well, and deserves an extra feed.' So saying, Howe hung the reins over Gilbert's arm, and walked on slowly and sadly to the place of hiding. His quick and thrice-repeated tap brought Patience to the door.

'John, did'st see Rupert safely on the way?'

'Ay, safely, dear wife; but I would speak with Randall. Is he within?'

'He is just about to start for Princes Risborough.'

'Then I am still in time,' quoth Howe, entering the room.

Philip Randall was sorting and tying up some papers, and his face seemed all the sterner viewed by the sweet and open countenance of his brother-in-law. The two men looked somewhat suspiciously at one another, then Howe spoke:

'Randall, you are in danger: men are upon your track, and upon that of your Puritan friends. Your meeting at Princes Risborough will be disturbed; you cannot go there.'

'But I must,' said Randall. 'I am no coward, John Howe, and go well armed to the meeting.'

'You must up and be gone, but not to

the meeting. Take advantage of the night, and so gain time. I myself have been tracked by spies, and am not sure of not being followed at this moment. I have had to ride for my safety. Depart, Philip Randall, swiftly and in secrecy, and tell no one whither you go.'

'We Puritans desert not our comrades in time of need,' said Randall, grimly; 'we keep faith, man, and I am pledged to the meeting.'

'Then by all I hold sacred and dear, Philip Randall, I will keep you here a prisoner, and should we be surprised, why then——' He paused.

'Thou wilt deliver me into the hands of our enemies. Patience, thou hast a double-faced husband.'

'Randall, I give you fair warning. Start this very night to some place of safety, or you bring ruin upon us all. Take a horse from my stables, take a purseful of money, but begone.'

'Brother, go, I conjure you,' exclaimed Patience, her white face turned towards Randall.

'If I leave my friends, they will have no warning, they will be taken like rats in a hole. My duty calls me to them,—our

safety, our peril, we hold in common.' As Randall spoke, he attempted to pass out, but his arm was seized by John Howe.

'Not one step from here, unless you swear not to go to Princes Risborough. If taken amongst those plotters against the King, no mercy will be shown you, and the heavy hand of the law will fall upon Patience, as being your sister, upon Gilbert for being her child——'

'And not upon thyself?' said Randall. 'Perchance thou hast played the informer already, and wouldst keep me to deliver me up.'

'Good brother, depart,' said Patience, trembling with fear and indignation. 'I pledge myself to acquaint thy friends with the reason of thy flight. I myself will provide for thy safety.'

'Patience, thou art my wife—no Puritan now,' said her husband, sternly; 'thou pledgest nought. Randall, depart, and fly this country, if thou carest for thine own life and the safety of thy friends.'

At that moment Gilbert's voice was heard, and Patience, darting from the room, found the child upon the doorway.

'Mother,' said the boy, anxiously, 'Mistress Bridget says the Puritans are to be

hunted to-night by the King's men. Is it true?'

'They are, my child,' exclaimed Patience, seizing the boy in her arms. 'Randall, have pity upon us!'

'Depart,' said Howe; 'take the north road; so thou wilt escape thy pursuers.'

'I will go,' said Randall, 'northwards, as thou askest, but first to Princes Risborough, to warn our brethren. Fear nought for thyself, man of faint heart and craven spirit.' And like some stealthy being of the night, he issued from the Hermitage, and was soon lost to view.

As he departed, Patience turned her eyes upon her husband. 'Art satisfied, John? Thou hast driven him away.'

'I have saved him,' said Howe, quietly. 'But *we* are not safe, dear Patience. Thou misjudgest me. Thy brother will gain a night's march upon his enemies. To-morrow he will lie at some friendly house, and then embark at a seaport for Scotland. I trust he will shun Wendover, a town disaffected to the King, and held in ill-repute.'

So saying, John Howe led the way back to the house, where the provident and curious Bridget was laying an attractive

supper-table. She curtsied low to her master, and seemed to wish to enter into conversation. But the master and his wife were silent, and Gilbert was the only prattler. The evening, however, was not fated to be a quiet one. It was late, and Patience was preparing to retire, when horses' feet sounded on the road, and men's voices were raised, asking for admittance. The door was opened by Howe himself. The moon at that moment lighted up the forms of half a dozen well-armed and mounted men, who bore a more formidable aspect than the three riders from whom Howe had parted that same afternoon. Their leader demanded if any one could tell of the whereabouts of one Master Randall.

'You must go elsewhere to seek him, good sirs,' said Howe.

'Not so glib, not so glib, Master Howe,' was the quick reply. 'We know that Master Randall is kith and kin to thee, so, pray thee, give us admittance.'

'Ay, good sirs, admittance if you like, and supper also,' exclaimed Howe, promptly. 'Here, men, come and hold the horses.'

The unwelcome visitors dismounted, entered the house, and instantly commenced

their fruitless search from room to room for the formidable Puritan. That over, they sat down without much pressing to a good meal.

'There is still one nook,' said one of them during the repast, 'which we fain would visit. It is, I believe, a room built in the garden. Would you lead us there, Master Howe?'

The assent was given with alacrity, and the men rose somewhat reluctantly from the table to search the Hermitage. Even upon finding it empty, they seemed suspicious, and their suspicions were confirmed by one or two loose papers, which one of their troop managed to pick up and secrete. But they had no excuse for lingering longer, and soon departed for Wendover, where they were to spend that night.

Patience, when they were gone, begged pardon of her husband.

'Silly child,' said he, 'to doubt me. But, thank God, thy brother is safe, and so are we.'

Randall's warning had come in time to save the Puritans from capture, and probable death. He had appeared at the midnight meeting at Princes Risborough, which he broke up, exhorting his companions to

flight. Thus when the Royalists arrived at the town, they had already left it, and so rapid had been the flight, that it was impossible to follow the fugitives.

Yet Wendover was closely watched for some time by men who called themselves ministers of the law, but who were in reality coarse and greedy spies, ready to swear to anything, and longing to gain notoriety in this special service for the King. Such men, the very scum of the earth, were only too glad, a few years later, to head the great anti-Popery plot, and to bring numbers of unfortunate persons to the Tower and the scaffold. It is needless to say that the King himself knew little or nothing of such deeds, and indeed the good-natured, but indolent, pleasure-loving monarch was only too willing when asked to grant unlimited reprieves and pardons.

John Howe, meanwhile, had betaken himself to his favourite work, whilst Patience occupied herself for several hours each day in teaching Gilbert. Like Queen Bess and Jane Grey of old, Mistress Patience was a scholar, and could have put to shame any one of the Court beauties, who seemed to have but one task, that of compelling the admiration of the gay loungers of Whitehall.

Patience was a Puritan's daughter, and it was, perhaps, for this reason that, in teaching her boy, she lingered with special fondness over the pages of the Old Testament, and taught him to repeat verse after verse of its history.

John Howe left his wife to instruct the eager and thoughtful child, whilst he, with brush and easel, strove to put some of his fleeting fancies upon his canvas. He was intent upon finishing his sketch of Nell Gwynn. It was so strange and fascinating a face, the whole being was so unlike any one whom he had ever seen; there was poetry in the blue eyes, sauciness in the dimpled chin, humour in the pouting lips; and, ennobled and purified by the painter's art, there was a charm of childlike innocence, which clung to every line of the face and turn of the figure.

CHAPTER V

FROM WOTTON

Full three years had passed since the departure of Rupert, when, upon one cool and cloudy afternoon, a youth, escorted by a tall

serving-man, whose saddle seemed well supplied with pistols, rode up gaily to the door of the artist. Gilbert, hearing a clatter of horses' feet, flung aside his book, and dashed out to meet—not his brother, but a tall and comely stripling, whose sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks made him look the very picture of youth and health. He flung his reins to Gilbert.

'I must dismount, my boy,' he said, 'for I have a letter from Rupert Howe, and bring good tidings of him. Thou art his brother?'

'Yes, yes,' said the boy, gazing upon the bright youth before him. 'Come quick to my mother.'

In another moment the stranger found himself welcomed as a friend by Mistress Patience, and conducted triumphantly into John Howe's studio.

'This gentleman brings news of Rupert,' said the mother.

'Good news, I trust!' exclaimed John Howe.

'Ay, good news, in truth, for Rupert has proved so gentle and diligent a pupil, that Mr. Evelyn has presented him to the King at Whitehall, and His Majesty has made him his page.

'His page!' exclaimed Howe.

'Is Rupert well?' demanded the mother, 'and happy? Does he love his new honours?'

'Is he grown much, and has he learnt the duties of a Cavalier?' asked the father.

'Does he send me a greeting?' said little Gilbert.

'Rupert's letter will tell you all,' said the youth, taking a letter tied with ribbon from his breast, and handing it to John Howe.

The ribbon was cut, the letter opened and read by the father—read aloud, so that wife and child might hear it. This was, of course, not the first epistle which the boy had penned, but some weeks, nay months, had sped by since the last letter had been received.

'My honoured parents,

'It behoveth me to write and tell you the good and happy news. I am to be a page of His Gracious Majesty. Mr. Evelyn did let me study with his own sons, and their tutor was so learned a gentleman, and so fine a scholar, coming from Italy, and being well versed in Italian, Spanish, and French, besides Greek and Latin, that he has taught me more than I ever hoped to learn in so short a while. Wotton is a great and beautiful place, which I love dearly; but when Mr. Evelyn

did tell me that I should ride with him to London, I felt quite joyous and full of hope. Upon arriving in the great city, Mr. Evelyn took me to the Bow Street Coffee-house, where I found myself in a goodly company of great lords, some wearing their stars and garters, of clergy in cassocks and bands, of young men full of knowledge from Cambridge and Oxford, of all manners of writers and makers of books. In the balcony, looking into Covent Garden, a big chair was placed, and there sat Mr. John Dryden. He smiled when he saw Mr. Evelyn, and made him come to him through a great press of people, and offered him snuff out of his box. I made my best bow, and Mr. Dryden patted my head, and then fell to talking of one Mr. Racine, who writes poetry in France, and who, men say, is now the fashion. We supped in the Coffee-house, and then we left Covent Garden, where a most filthy and noisy market is held close to the dwellings of the great. We fell over big cabbages at the Countess of Berkshire's door, and we had to elbow our way through crowds of screaming fruiterers and fighting carters. At last Mr. Evelyn hailed some chairmen, and we were carried down in chairs to that grand and stately palace called Whitehall. Sentinels were standing at the gate, and some of the King's body-guard were stationed under the windows. We passed on through all these great crowds, many a one speaking to Mr. Evelyn, until we came to an antechamber, where the gentlemen were all dressed in splendid coats, wearing stars and ribbons upon

their breasts. There was Lord Hatton, comptroller of His Majesty's household, the Portuguese Ambassador, the young Marquis of Argyle, and one who looked full of fire and courage, and who had a scar across his cheek. This was Prince Rupert. But I had no time to look longer, for on a sudden the tapestry was withdrawn, and the King himself entered, accompanied by my lord of Buckingham. His Majesty had a bright smile for us all.

'"So ho! my lords and gentlemen," he said, "I am going to introduce to you a queen, who has but lately come from Barbadoes: 'tis Queen Pine herself. She has a goodly crown overtopping her head, and is a rare precious dame."

'Therewith stepped forward a gardener, who carried aloft a great yellow fruit, with a prickly skin, and a great show of leaf upon it.

'"Rose, thou carriest Her Majesty with care," said the King. "We will have her on the suppertable to-night, and claim closer acquaintance with her. Gentlemen, go you with me this evening to see our fair Roscalana, in *The Siege of Rhodes?* Ah! Mr. Evelyn, you have brought me your young charge. Come hither, child."

'I stepped forward, bowed, and kissed the hand extended to me.

'"Thy name, boy?"

'"Rupert, may it please your Majesty."

'"Rupert, a right royal name thou wearest. May it become thee well. What wouldst thou of me."

'"Rupert wishes to serve Your Majesty," said Mr. Evelyn. "He will, so Your Majesty approve, learn his duties of Lord Hatton."

'"And so be it," said the King. And then, dear father, His Majesty talked of many a subject with all the gentlemen around him, and I stood by and looked with wonder at the numbers of people passing and repassing. Then Mr. Evelyn left me with my lord of Hatton, and I was to be enrolled among His Majesty's pages, of which there are a great number; but indeed, I hardly know their names or faces either. But a few nights since I was on duty, for I stood behind His Majesty's chair during dinner, and then walked behind him to the playhouse. We saw the *Humorous Lieutenant.* It was a very silly play, dear mother; thou wouldst have hated it. But there was a fair maiden in the play called *Celia.* All clapped their hands, and laughed, when she laughed, and cried when she cried. But I knew that I had seen the sweet maid's face before. Then some one called out that that was Nell Gwynn, and I thought of my dear father's picture, and I looked and looked so long till I caught her eye, and she went off the stage kissing her fingers to me.

When next I saw Mistress Gwynn, 'twas walking in the Mall, with a brave blue dress and a white hat, talking and laughing; and His Majesty, as he passed her, asked her what play she was to act in that night, and she said,

'"I shall be Florimel in the *Maiden Queen,*—

a gay young spark, like that pretty boy." Then out with her white hand, bidding me doff my hat.

'"Why dost stare so?" she asked me.

'"Because I have seen you before," I replied; "on canvas, in paint."

'"Bless me," she said, "you may often do that, boy. I wear a canvas gown in the morning, and the paint is still thick on my cheeks!" at which a shout of laughter, and we passed on. But all the town went to see the play that night, father, and Mr. Pepys declared that never was so great a comic part played, and Mistress Nell Gwynn had the true carriage, air, and looks of a gallant. Mr. Pepys has asked me to sup with him, and he is a very entertaining gentleman, who knoweth every one about town. But Mr. Evelyn says I must not neglect my studies, although study is not much thought of in this gay palace.

'I pray you, my dear parents, receive with kind hospitality and friendship him who bringeth these news of me, one Master William Penn, whose merry face and loving heart have always won hearty friends. I kiss your hands, and send my loving and dutiful greetings; also my brotherly greeting to Gilbert, hoping that he is well, and that he pursueth his studies to my dear mother's satisfaction.—This from your obedient son,

'RUPERT.'

'Rupert is a bright, happy youth,' quoth Master Penn, as the parents shook him by

the hand, 'and will come to no harm, though London is a wild place.'

'Alas!' sighed Patience, 'it maketh my blood run cold to hear of the play-houses. Oh, the wickedness of the great city!'

She threw her arms round Gilbert, who turned his dark eyes admiringly upon William Penn.

'There is Mistress Nell,' said John Howe, smiling and pointing to his picture.

'Let's turn her face to the wall, the saucy jade!' said the wife sternly.

CHAPTER VI

AN EVIL DAY

One day when Gilbert is plucking primroses and anemones in the beech woods, he is startled by horses' hoofs, and a stranger rides past him. How the boy is longing for Rupert's return, or for another visit from William Penn, whose bright and cheery companionship had been a thing to be remembered and blessed! But the stranger who has ridden by is of sterner mould, and Gilbert recognises in him one of the Puritans of past days, a friend of his uncle's.

He sees the child busy over his golden flowers: he stops and calls him.

'I have news for Mistress Patience Howe. Is she within?'

'Yes, master. Pray, do you come from my Uncle Randall?'

'So! thou art kith and kin to that brave and unhappy man? Ay! truly do I come from him. He is sore distressed, and in great need of help and money.'

'Follow me, good master, and I will lead you to our home.'

'Nay, jump up before me,' said the rider, seizing Gilbert by the wrist, and helping him vault into the saddle. Thus the two cantered along through the wood, coming at last to the pointed gables of the artist's home. It was still early. John Howe was away. He had ridden to Wotton to see his friend Mr. Evelyn, and hoped to go on to London and have a sight of Rupert.

Mistress Patience was tossing cakes in her kitchen. From the window she espied the two riding towards the house, and shaking the fine white flour from her arms, hastened to the porch.

'What news, Jeremiah March?—what news of Randall?'

Gilbert dismounted, helped the rider to

do the same, and conducted the weary steed to the stables.

Meanwhile, March had drawn from his breast a letter and given it to Patience. It was short, and ran as follows :—

'SISTER,

'I have been tracked, hunted, and have twice escaped being taken. I am penniless, and well-nigh starving. I lie for shelter in Sherwood Forest, and hope that the Lord will grant me strength and power to set sail for the new country. Send me, I pray thee, help through Jeremiah March.

'Thy brother,

'PHILIP RANDALL.'

Patience determined upon helping her brother, so after placing a substantial meal before the messenger, she left him to pen a reply to Randall. She entreated of him to be prudent, and to set sail at once for America, where he would find friends and supporters. She signed and sealed the letter, and added a small bag of money to the packet, the size of which was increased by two or three ornaments, which Patience set little store by, and which she looked upon as savouring of Popery.

'If my husband had been with me, he would not have liked this,' she thought ; 'but

it is my own, and I will not touch his gold for a cause which he loves not.'

Loyal both to brother and husband, she gave a sigh, pressed her lips upon the packet, breathed a prayer for the safety of Randall, and went back to Jeremiah March. This stout and trusty servant was steadily fortifying himself for his ride, whilst Gilbert sat opposite to him, questioning him upon the miserable existence of the fugitive Puritans. The old man was delighted at his eagerness, and gave his opinion that Gilbert Howe was a worthy grandson of the famous Master Isaac Randall.

It was now the mother's turn to ask countless questions, and to hear of the straits and misfortunes of Randall and his friends—how irate the Royalists had grown, how they waged fierce war against the Puritans, and how the King had been incited to imprison all who were suspected of disloyalty.

'The prisons are full,' said March, 'and many of the prisoners will be tried, and hanged for treason.' And the grim old Puritan frowned, and gave utterance to an oath.

All day long he spent with Patience and her boy, but at nightfall he rode forth, armed

to the teeth, and his face half hidden by his hat and cloak.

'Oh, Gilbert, what dangers are abroad!' said Patience, shuddering; 'what a dark, sad time this is, when the wicked triumph over the righteous!'

Meanwhile, the trusty messenger urged his horse forward, and proceeded on his way towards the city of Oxford. Once he was puzzled by a cross-road, and stood hesitating. During that moment the sound of a horse's hoof struck upon his ear. He listened,—there was complete silence. But suddenly a shadow fell across his path, then came the click of a spur, then the falling of a horse's hoof. He reined in, and drew a loaded pistol from the saddle. In the space of a moment one hand was on his horse's bit, while another one was placed upon his breast. He discharged his pistol, and heard a heavy fall at his side, a muttered oath, and an exclamation. But almost at the same moment he felt his arms pinioned, and was unseated. He tried to struggle with his adversaries, but found himself, alas! a captive. He was placed upon a horse, and surrounded by a small escort of about a dozen men, who accompanied him back to a hostelry, which stood somewhat apart

from the highroad. The man whom he had probably wounded he heard groaning at his side, and was aware that he had been lifted up by his companions, who were bearing him along on a hastily-formed litter.

Upon arriving at the hostelry, March was helped to dismount, and was invited in no gentle voice to pass the threshold and enter. Mine host seemed prepared for his guests, and conducted them to a large chamber, where, by the light of a huge fire, Jeremiah was able, for the first time, to distinguish the faces and forms of his captors. They were all Royalists, and not unknown to the old Puritan ; indeed, some of the numerous scars which he bore on his person might be attributed to the strength of their arms upon previous encounters. A smile of recognition, grim indeed, but still a smile, passed over his face, and then he turned to look at the wounded man.

'Thou deservest to sing psalms all thy life for this night's work,' said one of the Royalists, 'though that were poor punishment for such as thou art. Comrades, search him.'

The order was obeyed with great zest. Jeremiah was tightly pinioned, and his doublet opened, unripped, and plundered.

The bag of money fell to the ground, and was eagerly picked up by the men, whilst the leader of the band opened and read the letter of Patience Howe.

'So we are not far wrong,' he exclaimed, as he looked at the signature; 'and Wendover Dene, fair and loyal as it would pretend to be, harbours a nest of traitors. Ah! my fine Master Howe, we shall thank you in person for the gallop which you led us across country; and we shall hope to eat another supper at your house, like that good meal you prepared for us once before. And now, sir, we would fain speak a word with one Master Randall. You were on your way to his lair; you shall still go there, but in our company.'

But not one syllable could be extracted from the lips of Jeremiah March, not one hint would he give of Randall's hiding-place; nor did he accept the gigantic goblet of beer which was handed to him, with a ribald jest, when the Royalists betook themselves to their supper.

'Say grace for us, O chaplain,' shouted one of the carousers; 'or hear ours and give us thy blessing.' And then followed a song which was not calculated to soften the anger and indignation of the Puritan. The

wounded man was taken to another chamber to be tended by mine host; and in an hour's time the whole party were sleeping after their carouse; whilst two sentinels stood guard over Jeremiah—an unnecessary precaution, seeing that he was not able to move.

It was quite early on the following morning that the party of Royalists, now divided into two bands, set forth upon their expedition. Jeremiah March, who had partaken in sullen silence of his morning meal, was placed upon his horse, and was bidden, upon pain of instant death if he refused, to continue his road to Master Randall. The unfortunate man, resolving to give his master another chance, turned towards Risborough, a known Puritan stronghold. He hoped, through some lucky accident, to be able to communicate with Randall, and thus to give him time to escape across the sea.

The ride to Princes Risborough was performed swiftly and silently. No Puritan was to be found in the town; but mine host of the Crown Inn, a scoundrel of the first water, gave information respecting the hiding-place of Randall, who, he declared, had betaken himself to Sherwood Forest. The men rested and baited their horses, and proceeded upon their way, threatening to put Jeremiah

March to the torture if he would not reveal the hiding-place of his master. But no threats could unseal the honest Puritan's lips. For three long days they rode steadily on, arriving at last at Nottingham. Thence they turned into that glorious forest, celebrated in the age of Robin Hood, and still the home of fugitives and outlaws. But how to find a hunted man in this tangle of tree and shrub?

Weary and disgusted, the leader of the band halted at last at a small village, or rather at a collection of foresters' huts, and imperatively summoned the woodmen about him. Poor people! they were now well used to excess of violence, and were ready to give information to either Royalist or Puritan upon the first menace. The threat of conflagration or of some terrible bodily chastisement was enough to make them, for that day, the most devoted Royalists, and they prepared to scour the country in search of Randall. To Jeremiah March no mercy was to be shown, and if the search proved vain, the trusty servant was to be hanged. Late on the same day this threat was to have been executed, and Jeremiah was led by his captors beneath one of the oak-trees of the forest.

'Kneel down and say thy prayers,' said

his persecutors, 'and confess thy sins.' The poor man obeyed, praying for his master's safety, when the branches of the tree were pushed aside, and a voice exclaimed,—

'Hold, scoundrels! and be not so over-anxious to prepare your home in hell.'

It was Randall *himself*.

Lurking about, and hardly daring to forsake his hiding-place, the Puritan had watched the arrival of his enemies. He had sought to communicate with his trusty serving-man, but had failed; and now walked boldly forward and confronted his enemies. A brave man has always a great power over his fellow-creatures. The men fell back, and March leaped to the side of his master.

'We are two,' he whispered; 'we will sell our blood dearly. Master, hand me a pistol.'

The two determined men, placing themselves against that very oak-tree which was to have played the part of gallows to poor March, now prepared for a desperate encounter, and Randall, sword in hand, tried to cut a passage through his enemies. March dealt tremendous blows right and left, covering Randall with his own sturdy form, until a sword-stroke opened a hideous wound in his side, causing him to reel and fall forwards.

'Master, I am dying,' gasped Jeremiah. 'Hie you away, and seize yon horse tied to the tree. It is my own.'

The Puritan pressed his comrade's hand. 'My poor March, thou diest a soldier's death,' he said, and murmured a prayer. He saw that he had fatally wounded three of his opponents, that he had killed one, and that only two remained. With almost superhuman strength he dealt a blow to the right and left, and leaping over the fallen men, vaulted into the horse's saddle. Striking his spurs into the animal's flanks, he dashed forward, a pistol-shot grazing his cheek and causing the blood to fall upon his neck.

'To horse! to horse!' shouted the men. But the horses were not on the spot, and before they were seated in their saddles, Randall had gained the start and was safe from his pursuers.

'My good and trusty serving-man, thou hast given thy blood for me,' sighed Randall. 'May thy soul be among the elect of the Lord!'

Poor Jeremiah March was buried by the woodmen, who rifled him of his clothes and his sword; but they left his prayer-book lying on his breast. Wrapped round it was a golden curl, which belonged to a little

daughter, and the smile which played upon the dead man's lips was the smile with which he was going to meet his angel-child.

. . . . .

Patience Howe was teaching Gilbert his lessons, when Bridget burst hastily in at the door.

'They are coming, Mistress,' she said. 'I see their plumes and tall hats. 'Tis the Royalists, I'll be bound.'

Patience rose, feeling sick at heart, and flinging open her casement window beheld the unwelcome face of Smith, who was accompanied by several mounted companions.

'Mistress Patience Howe,' exclaimed Smith in a loud voice, 'we proclaim you a traitor, harbouring rebellious persons, sheltering Puritans, and sustaining with money those who are proscribed by the Crown. In the King's name, we arrest you.'

Thus spoke Smith, dismounting and entering the hall, where Patience and Gilbert now stood prepared to meet him. As the man spoke, he placed his hand on Mistress Howe's wrist. At this insult, old Martin, followed by one or two servants, came forward, and, dashing his fist into the

face of the Royalist, bid him unhand his mistress.

'Arrest the man,' exclaimed Smith, insolently ; 'and lock those screaming servant wenches up in their kitchen.'

It was, however, no easy matter to arrest old Martin. A loaded pistol was in his hand, a sword hung by his side. But the Royalists were no cowards either, and incited by resistance, they rushed upon old Martin, who, before he could defend himself, was stunned by several heavy blows. But now a pistol-shot burst unexpectedly upon the ears of the combatants, and Smith himself was wounded in the shoulder. It was Gilbert who had fired the shot.

'Bind the young whelp,' exclaimed Smith, with an oath, maddened with rage and pain.

But Patience and Martin kept guard over the boy, and a terrible fray ensued. At last a voice came ringing from without—

'Stay, stay ! what meaneth this noise ? ' and a step, well known to Patience, was heard upon the threshold. It was her husband.

' What mean you, ye villains ? ' said John Howe, his eye flashing at the scene before

him, his arm raised to encircle Gilbert, who sprang to his side.

'Ah, John Howe! we have you, traitor!' exclaimed Smith. 'Arrest him, my men. To the Tower with all this accursed Puritan lot!'

'Patience, what meaneth this?' said Howe, gazing in astonishment upon his wife. 'Say, have we harboured Puritans? Have we conspired against the King? We are innocent and blameless.'

'But we have proofs to the contrary,' said Smith, insolently. 'We know that one Philip Randall has been in hiding here; that that same Philip Randall receives money and letters from one Miss Patience Howe.'

'And where are your proofs, you men of violence?' exclaimed Howe.

'They speak the truth,' interrupted Patience, in clear loud tones. 'John Howe, I am a Puritan in heart and spirit. I am in league with Philip Randall.'

'Patience, wife! what meanest thou?' said the artist, paling.

But Patience, unheeding, continued, 'I have given my money to the Puritans. I have harboured them unbeknown to thee. My brother has lain for shelter in this house, and but lately I have sent him a letter with money, which he sorely needeth.'

'And here is thy letter, Mistress,' said one of the men. 'Here is the paper taken from old Jeremiah's doublet.'

Howe seized the paper, but Patience took it from him, and read aloud the following lines :—

'DEAR BROTHER,

'My heart aches for thee. I would help thee, but dare not do more than send thee money which I have saved, and jewels which belong to me and which I have never worn. My husband loveth not the great cause, but belongeth to them who bow before an earthly king. My heart goeth out towards thee, my brother, for are we not both children of the great Isaac Randall?

'THY SISTER.'

'Patience, my wife,' exclaimed the miserable man, 'why hast thou done this?'

'I could not forget the old teaching,' said Patience. 'I am a Puritan, husband. Forgive me.'

Instinctively she approached him, but he turned from her. She clung to him, but he would not let her speak.

'Thou lovest me not. Thou hast never loved me,' said the artist, coldly. 'Oh, Patience, thou hast brought ruin on our home!'

He let his head droop upon his hands;

he burst into tears. The men stood speechless and amazed.

'John,' said Patience, still calmly, 'thou wilt heed the child Gilbert? Thou wilt tell Rupert to love his brother? And see,' she added, 'I have this Bible for the boy. Keep it for him, husband.'

Once more she advanced towards John Howe, once more she tried to speak to him; but he did not move, and her voice failed her. She signed to Smith to come near.

'When shall we go?' she said.

'Whither, dame?'

'To the Tower.'

Then John Howe turned and gazed upon that white, unflinching face, upon those tearless eyes, and with a sob, he spoke:

'Men, lead onwards. We go to the Tower together.'

Then Patience once more approached him, and this time he let her speak. But her voice sunk to a whisper.

'Husband,' she said, in hushed tones, 'I have saved thee. None now can doubt thine innocence. Wilt thou forgive me? Thou wouldst not let me tell thee this before. I have declared myself guilty, even guiltier than I am, for thy sake and the children's.'

Meanwhile, the news spread like wildfire in the village, and crowds soon assembled round the house of the unfortunate artist. Some exonerated Patience, whilst others called her a traitor ; some prayed that mercy might be shown her, but others hooted and cursed.

A litter was hastily formed for carrying Mistress Howe to London, and the preparations for departure were rapidly progressing. Gilbert, scared with alarm and consternation, hid himself amongst the serving-people ; Bridget, alarmed, tried to curry favour with the Royalists ; whilst Martin, hardly knowing what to believe, or whom to trust, sat dejectedly in the courtyard, not responding to the questions of the neighbours. People flocked in at the open gates, and surrounded the house. They were excited by the strange story they had heard, and wished to see once more the woman who had deliberately given herself up to imprisonment. At last, the word of command came. Smith and his companions rose from a noontide meal, and proceeded to mount their horses. Then John Howe appeared in the courtyard, with his wife and his child at his side. A murmur ran through the crowd.

'Good-bye, my friends,' said Patience, slowly. 'You are all such good Royalists that you will love my husband and my child. When I am gone the last stain will be washed from the fair town of Wendover.'

Upon this a shout: 'Nay, Mistress, we love you. You are a good and honest woman.'

'But a Puritan,' said Patience. Then she flung her arm round Gilbert, who was weeping, and her tears fell fast and freely. 'Are there mothers amongst you?' she exclaimed.

'Ay, yes, Mistress, as thou knowest.'

'Then love this boy.'

A dozen hands were extended. But Martin drew Gilbert into his own brawny arms. 'He is in my charge, Mistress,' he said; 'and I will ride with him to Wotton, to seek good Mr. Evelyn.'

''Tis well, Martin. Depart, and hie thee on thy journey,' said John Howe; 'for I am a prisoner like Patience. I share her fate.'

So saying, the artist lifted his wife into the litter, and mounting his horse prepared for departure. He crushed his felt hat over his eyes, so as not to see the parting between Patience and Gilbert.

It was late on the following day when Mistress Evelyn was summoned to her great oak reception-chamber. There she found an ancient man-at-arms standing before her, with a pale-faced boy, whose doublet was covered with dust, and whose face was lined with streaks of blood. The child crept up to her, and said, 'For the love of Rupert, save my mother,—she is in the Tower.'

'Good heavens!' exclaimed the lady. 'And thy father?'

'He is there also,' said Martin, clenching his fist. 'But he is a Royalist, and in no such pressing danger. But Mistress Patience—— Nay, Gilbert, fear not.'

But Gilbert had fainted. As Mistress Evelyn stooped to take the boy in her arms, Martin said, 'I will leave the child with you, good Madam, and must now take the sad tidings to our little Rupert.'

'Alas! alas!' quote Mistress Evelyn, wringing her hands, 'Rupert is away with my lord of Buckingham.'

CHAPTER VII

A LITTLE PAGE AND A GAY LADY

A PAINTER is standing at his easel, but it is not John Howe; and he is dressed in silk and satin garments, like the veriest gallant of the realm. A young girl is sitting to him for her picture, in a loose flowing garb of sky blue and amber. A string of pearls is round her neck, a diamond crescent in her brown hair, and she says, with a dimpling smile, 'Ye will paint me as Diana, will ye not, Sir Peter?'

'Ay, surely, Mistress Gwynn, and never had I a more perfect model.'

'What, not lovely Mrs. Mallet?' says saucy Nell,—'Mrs. Mallet, with her snub nose and her sandy eyebrows,' and Nell arches her own. 'How good it is to be pretty,' says Nell, with a laugh,—'for people to praise our eyes, and toy with our curls, and kiss our hands! But indeed, Sir Peter, 'tis sore work to sit for my picture.'

'Have you ever sat before, Mistress Gwynn?'

'Once,' says the actress (for Nell is an actress now, and the rage of the play-goers);

'but that was in the old days, when I stood at the door of the play-house.'

'And who was the artist, Mistress Gwynn?'

'A gentleman from the country, in quiet and sober dress, but a gentleman, for all that, of the right sort, Sir Peter. I stood with him at the door of the play-house and pointed out the gay folk to him, and he was as quiet and as bashful as a girl.'

'As my Diana?' laughed Sir Peter. 'But where is the artist, and where is the picture?'

'The artist belongs to my battered, tattered past days,' said Nell, with a tear dimming her bright eyes; 'and the picture,' she said, rising and rushing to the easel, 'was more like than yours.'

Sir Peter's face clouded. 'And where may that work of art be?'

But the question remained unanswered, for the artist's door was opened somewhat hastily, and a serving-man announced, 'A message from the Duke of Buckingham.'

Buckingham's name was as potent as the King's, and a whim or a caprice of the favourite was gratified with readiness by the courtiers. Thus Sir Peter, often disposed to resent interruptions, laid his brush aside as the messenger entered.

It was a boy, slim and graceful, whose dark eyes and delicate features might have rendered him a worthy model for the artist. He held his cap in his hand and bowed.

'Mistress Gwynn, my Lord Duke begs you will act *The Custom of the Country* this day se'nnight. He has some friends who will sit with him on the stage, and His Majesty bade me bring the message.'

'And who may'st thou be, my pretty boy?'

'Rupert Howe, His Majesty's page. I have but just returned from abroad with His Grace, to whom I was lent by the King.'

'Go and look at my picture, Rupert,' said Nell; 'for I was saying pretty words to Sir Peter Lely as thou camest in.'

'The boy looked and gazed, smiled, and then suddenly exclaimed, 'Mistress Gwynn! I have seen your picture before.'

'And when was that?'

In my father's house, painted by my father's brush,—oh! so bright and saucy, with an old torn brown cloak. I asked him whose it was, and he told me it was the portrait of Nell Gwynn, the flower-girl. I never forget it, and when I saw you acting on the boards of the play-house, and people shouted out your name and applauded, then

I saw the same face that I had seen in the picture at home, and I called out with the rest, "Mistress Gwynn!"'

Nell laughed, and said, 'Rupert, you must not prattle any more, for there is Sir Peter waiting to paint me. But hold, child, wear this bow in remembrance of me.' And the saucy actress tore a blue bow from her sleeve, and tossed it to Rupert.

'Another slave!' said the artist, seizing his brush. 'When will you be weary?'

'I'm weary now,' quoth Nell, shutting her bright eyes and throwing her head back. 'Sir Peter, play me an air on that sweet dulcimer of thine.'

The artist complied, we have no doubt, but Rupert withdrew, and walked rapidly back to Whitehall.

As he passed through the courtyard, he suddenly descried an old serving-man coming towards him, whose face seemed lined and furrowed with care. In an instant Rupert was by his side, for he had recognised Martin.

'What news of home?' he exclaimed.

'Ay, bad ones, young master,' was the whispered answer.

'What say'st thou?'

'Thou must force thy way into that dread prison, the Tower, and must bring the

King's pardon to those who are languishing within.'

'And who are they?' said Rupert, imploringly.

'Thy father and mother.'

The boy well-nigh fainted with alarm, but he walked manfully onwards, and led Martin into his own poor and meagrely furnished chamber. There he heard of his parents' arrest, of their sad journey to the Tower, of their imprisonment, of his mother's heroic attempt to exonerate her husband and condemn herself, of a mock trial, which terminated in the promise of another trial in some months to come, and of the execution of several Puritans well known to him.

The King was unapproachable and helpless, and pardons daily sent were never presented. Rupert, hearing that Mr. Evelyn was in London, resolved to go and seek him forthwith at the celebrated Bow Street Coffee-house. Gilbert, he knew, was at Wotton, and Martin must remain at Whitehall, and help him in his plans.

The boy set forth upon his errand, and arrived at the coffee-house trembling with agitation. The rooms were thronged with people, who were discussing with interest every piece of news that was circulating in

the town,—every political tale, every literary squib, every theatrical anecdote. Rupert was elbowed by some, and waylaid by others, but he managed to accost Mr. Evelyn, who was reading a pamphlet, and to beg of him, in tones of alarm and anguish, to give him a few moments for a private interview. The kind gentleman, struck by the youth's mournful appearance, rose immediately from his seat, and taking Rupert into the library, led him into a curtained recess, where they were perfectly undisturbed. In a few words Evelyn was made acquainted with the sad turn which events had taken, and he could not help betraying how serious he thought the position of Rupert's parents.

Evelyn himself had been away both from London and Wotton for some while, and knew nothing of the imprisonment of John Howe and Patience, or of Gilbert's lying ill at Wotton.

'And when didst thou hear these tidings, my child?' he said, turning to Rupert.

'But now, upon quitting Mistress Gwynn, who was sitting for her portrait to Sir Peter Lely; and three months have gone by since my father and mother have been taken to the Tower. We spoke of my father,' the lad added, 'for Mistress Gwynn

remembers his painting her, and indeed, his picture was the fairest of the two.'

'The picture, child—his picture!' exclaimed Evelyn. 'Where may it be now?'

'At home,' answered Rupert,—'where home was once.'

'But we must have it here, at Whitehall; it must be brought with all speed and care.'

'And why, sir?'

'To obtain thy parents' liberty. Ah! Rupert, thou wilt see. It shall work wonders.'

'Then Martin shall take horse, and not slacken rein until he arrives at Wendover Dene. He shall return with the picture by earliest dawn.'

The boy sprang to his feet and was hastening away.

'Rupert, let the picture be taken to thy room at Whitehall, and to-morrow at noon I will be with thee.'

As the page hastened away, Evelyn gave a deep sigh at the unfortunate imprisonment of John Howe; but then, smiling at his scheme, he walked slowly back to the crowded Club-room, and seating himself at the writing-table, wrote with his usual care and exactitude a letter, which he signed and

sealed, and then sent to its direction. The letter was taken to the dwelling of Mr. Pepys, who, upon opening it, read with astonishment that the grave Mr. Evelyn intended honouring his house on the following evening, by becoming a guest at a supper-party, where the frolicsome Mistress Gwynn was to hold high revel.

'My wife shall wear her blue satin sack, of which she is so proud,' said the little man, joyously. 'Who knows but Mr. Evelyn may come in company with the King's Majesty?'

The play was over the next evening, and the people were thronging from the theatre, the ladies in their coaches and their chairs, the men elbowing their way along the dark and badly-lighted streets. Torch-bearers ran nimbly along, the flare of their torches casting a strange light upon the passers-by. One of the chairs contained a lady who was chatting gaily with those who walked beside her. Her bearers stopped at the door of Mr. Pepys, and Nell Gwynn, still in her stage dress, alighted and ran quickly up the steps, where she was met by her host. As she entered the crowded supper-room, she was received with the exaggerated compliments and exclama-

tions of the day. But a grave voice at her side said, 'Mistress Gwynn, pray thee follow me into the next room, before we drink the toast of the evening. I have something to show you which may bring back old days.'

'And what is that, pray?' said the flippant actress—'my brown cloak, or an orange?'

'You are right—you will see both again,' and Mr. Evelyn led Nell Gwynn aside into a small wainscoated chamber, where an easel stood supporting a picture. She went up to the easel, and saw her former self, dressed in the old cloak, with the well-known orange basket upon her arm. She started, and a blush suffused her cheek, a blush which burnt through her rouge. 'But wherefore this jest?' said she, unwilling to betray her emotion.

''Tis not a jest, but real cruel earnest; for the painter of this picture is a prisoner in the Tower, and he and his wife may suffer as so many suffer now,—that is to say, they will walk from the Tower to the scaffold.'

'But Nell shall save them, I swear!' cried the actress, and her high heel rung upon the floor as she said these words. 'His Majesty must see this sweet face of

mine. To-morrow at dawn I go to take possession of the royal domain of Tring Park, and thither we will carry the picture. His Gracious Majesty is coming to sit beneath the shade of my spreading beech. He shall give a free, generous pardon to John Howe.'

At these words she heard a low sob, and saw Rupert at her side. He seized her outstretched hand to carry to his lips, but she bent forwards, and kissing him on his forehead said, 'I envy thee thy tears: I never had parents to weep for.' Then she swept back to the expectant company, and burst in upon them with a joke and a frolic, and the night's merriment began. Evelyn left the mad carousers, and Rupert followed him with a lightened heart.

CHAPTER VIII

UNDER THE BEECHES AT TRING PARK

'Twas high holiday in the country. The summer had dressed the trees in the brightest, freshest green, had flung roses over the hedges in a wild careless way of her own, had opened the petals of number-

less flowers, making the air rich with fragrance. Right royally did Queen June hold her court in the woods round Tring Park, where Mistress Nell Gwynn had arrived, and where His Majesty the King was hourly expected.

The red brick house belonging to Charles II., and presented to the favourite of the day, stood in close proximity to the town ; but it was built on rising ground, and looked over the humbler dwellings of the people.

A broad avenue of beech formed a pleasant vista from the house to the town, and a long and waving line of wooded hill brought sylvan sights and sylvan sounds to the very threshold of the inhabitants of Tring Park. The park itself, in gentle undulations, covered with sweeping beech, formed a succession of glades and knolls, where the deer wandered at will. It was a perfect picture of English woodland scenery.

The people of Tring were divided in feelings of loyalty to the king and resentment towards the favourite ; but whilst some courageous men spoke bold words against the corrupt practices of the day, others speculated upon the amount of profit

they might derive from royal visits. The pretty maidens of the town declared that Mistress Nell was a vulgar jade, who had no beauty to boast of, and the pert but droll sayings of the actress were talked of in every house and cottage of the town. She was hasty and passionate, but she was generous and kind-hearted. She loved the children, and had thrown gold to the cripple. She had jeered at the minister, but had wept when she passed a meeting-house where a psalm was being sung. She had horrified many by her audacious dress, but had danced at the fair as a country-maid, and had deceived every one as to her identity. She had spent idle days in lying under the trees, and had then tossed the hay with the hay-makers. She could swear and drink bumpers of wine, she could throw dice and play cards, but when alone would often sob and cry over her wasted life, and over the dark future which she apprehended. So ran the town talk.

King Charles had lain yesternight at Berkhampstead, and early on that bright June morning, accompanied by Buckingham, he had taken horse for Tring. Several attendants were riding behind them; amongst others was the little page Rupert, whose

excitement and impatience were portrayed in his flushed face and shining eyes. As the Cavaliers approached the town, they saw crowds awaiting them, and the King, with a smile on his lips, reined in his horse to acknowledge the salute of the people. Full of grace and dignity, his bearing won him instant favour, and his words were happily chosen.

'A fairy-like domain!' he exclaimed. 'A kingdom of wood and hill, where the summer sun is chastened by the breeze, and where the hunting-horn shall sound when the beeches are leafless. Good Buckingham, we will spend happy days here.' Then doffing his plumed hat, the merry monarch rode in at the gate of the avenue, whilst a shout of welcome rent the air. But a voice among the crowd said, 'A murrain on the house of Stuart, and on their lawless, godless ways!' 'Twas a Puritan who spoke, and he was hooted by a mob that had cheered Oliver Cromwell.

As the King entered the Park, his eye seemed in search of some familiar object. He looked and looked again. Lackeys, pages, attendants, came forth to him, but there was still something wanting. To the King it was lifeless.

'Where is the little witch, Nell?' said the King at last, and spurring on his horse, he rode up to the house.

'An' will Your Majesty have a posy?' said a blithe voice at his stirrup. Then Charles looked down and beheld a little figure in a rusty cloak, with a straw hat crushing her sunny hair all flying on her shoulders, with a basket full of flowers on her arm, and with a little spaniel at her heels. 'A posy, Your Majesty, of sweet-smelling roses from Your Majesty's own garden.'

The King laughed, dismounted, took the flowers from the girl's hand, and touched her fingers with his lips. Rupert was holding the stirrup.

'How now?' said the King, kindly. 'Art ill, child? Thy hand shakes and thy cheek burns.'

''Tis a fever, Your Majesty. The boy shall be treated and cared for,' quoth Nell, making a sign to Rupert to withdraw. 'He has been ailing for some while. But heed him not and follow me, for I would take you to the green woods.'

'And why this ugly dress, sweet Nell?'

''Tis not ugly to me. It is an old and a dear one,' said she, softly. 'Sir Peter painted me as a wild, half-dressed goddess, but I had

rather been painted as the flower-girl who first caught my Lord's eye.'

'An' so thou shalt, child,—as the orange-girl of the theatre, an thou will'st.'

Meantime they had ascended the steps and had entered the porch, which led into a large wainscoated oaken hall, rising up to the very roof of the house, a banqueting-hall of royal proportions, lined with pictures of the Stuarts and the Tudors, with a gallery running up above it, where the musicians played when the feasters sat below. In the middle of the hall stood an easel with a picture upon it, whilst a curtain hung before it.

'Your Majesty,' said Nell, 'will you grant that my poor face may be seen amongst all the great portraits hanging here?'

'Why, in truth, Nell, it shall; thou knowest it.'

Then she whisked off the curtain, and hid herself behind the easel, thus letting her own picture burst suddenly upon the King. The King exclaimed,—

'Why, 'tis a masterpiece!—'tis a work we must reward. Oh, sly Nell! Oh, sly Sir Peter——'

'Nay, nay, Your Majesty,' said Nell, springing from behind the frame, 'Sir Peter

knows naught of this; it is not his handiwork.'

'And whose then? Where may the artist tarry who paints so well?

'What may his reward be?' said the girl, raising her voice and evading the answer.

'What wills he?'

'The power to return to his home, the means of remaining there, and I suppose the company of those he loveth best.'

'He shall have them all, Nell, and I trow they are contained in this,' said Charles, tossing her a purse full of gold.

'Not quite,' said she, excitedly, yet retaining the purse; 'but Your Majesty granteth the reward he requires?'

'Yes, Nell, to please thee.'

'Your Majesty's word?'

'Thou hast it, child.'

'Then,' said Nell, 'Your Majesty has given liberty to one Master John Howe and his wife Patience, imprisoned in the Tower, and loyal servants of Your Majesty; but related to some atrocious Puritans. The foul relations have gone to the gallows, and John Howe and his wife would most assuredly follow them had I not their pardon, my Gracious Lord. Rupert, come hither, child. I told thee I would save them.'

Charles turned gravely to Buckingham at his side. 'These are State matters, and not fit for thee, Nelly. Why thrust thy fingers upon thorns? The Puritans are the thorns of my realm.' The King's face clouded.

'Indeed,' said Nell, quickly, 'I know naught of Royalists or Puritans, and see no great difference between them. They'd like to eat each other up, I trow, and leave Your Majesty alone in his kingdom.'

'Then why take such interest in them?' demanded Buckingham.

'Why, because, Your Grace, good men are rare, and John Howe is a good man.'

Buckingham coloured angrily. 'He is base-born and of the people.'

'And so am I,' quoth Nell. 'And no great harm to be base-born and of the people. They are flesh and blood like you, my Lord Duke, and will one day become dust and ashes as you will. As for their souls, I do not know which will have the best of it in the next world, Royalists or Puritans, and barring His Most Gracious Majesty, I should say it would be the Puritans.'

'Then save me from such a heaven, Nell,' said the King. 'But if I pardon this

John Howe, I shall be called a Puritan by my good and loyal subjects.'

'Not while I am looked graciously upon by Your Majesty,' said Nell, dimpling.

'And the Puritans are ready to swear that I am a Papist,' continued the King, querulously.

'And so Your Majesty must be,' said Nell: 'you are king of all your subjects, and must feel a little with all.'

'Nell, Nell, thou talkest of what becometh thee not,' said the King.

'Nay, Your Majesty, it becometh me well: Nell Gwynn is a true and loyal friend.'

'Impertinent chit!' muttered Buckingham.

'Read, Your Majesty, this letter from Mr. Evelyn. Does he not also add his voice to mine and sue for pardon? It has but just reached me.'

'From Evelyn!' said the King. He broke the seal and read the letter, seeming much reassured by its contents. 'There, Nell, you shall have the pardon,' said the good-natured monarch; 'but you all seem to have run wild about John Howe. Oh, Nell, come to the green wood and let us have peace.'

'Your Majesty will first sign the pardon,' said Nell, 'and let Rupert carry it to the Tower.'

Unable to refuse, Charles wrote, sealed, and signed the pardon, and presented it to Rupert, who received it kneeling, and then rushed tearfully, but how joyfully, from the royal presence.

CHAPTER IX

THE END

We must now return to John Howe and Patience, both prisoners in the Tower of London. In those days imprisonment meant utter disappearance. When the Tower gate shut upon an unfortunate prisoner, he felt, and felt truly, that the world had deserted him. The dreary months of captivity had been occasionally broken in upon by trials, which were grossly insulting or absurdly one-sided. John Howe and Patience had been tried separately and together, had responded bravely to their

judges, who were of a villainous class, and had at last resigned themselves to death, knowing that all hope for them was gone. Randall's escape was not known to them. They believed him to be dead, and they were awaiting their final sentence and the last visit of their children, a favour wrung from their captors by Patience's gold.

Day after day the door of the cell opening upon them had merely allowed a jailor to enter; but on the summer morning of which we are writing, the jailor's entry was made remarkable by his carrying a packet in his hand. It was a sealed paper, directed to John Howe.

He broke the seal, read, and well-nigh reeled to the ground. Then he said one word, 'Saved!' and taking Patience in his arms, kissed her wan cheeks. But she started to her feet and gave a spring towards the door, as Martin entered with Rupert and Gilbert.

That dark and terrible prison cell was transformed into a heaven, and prayers of joy and thankfulness burst from the lips of the artist and his wife.

Saved! Free to come and go as they liked, free to leave the Tower walls and to return to the hill country. Their jailor

opened the door of their cell, the governor bade them adieu with a smile, for he was not a hard-hearted man, and so they passed out into the court—passed out, not to the gallows, but to freedom. John Howe, weakened by captivity, shed tears, but Patience walked on in silence between Gibert and Rupert. She bore, however, a mark of her captivity,—her brown hair had whitened.

Sparkling and bright, bearing gay barges and countless boats, the river ran swiftly before them. They stepped into a boat, and were rowed away from the frowning walls, further and further, until their boat became one among a thousand on the great floating thoroughfare of London, and Rupert exclaimed,—

'No one would know that we come from the Tower.'

They disembarked at London Bridge, and there found kind Mr. Evelyn, who was awaiting them to speed them on their journey. Mr. Evelyn was not alone: a bright-eyed youth was at his side. Rupert dashed gladly forward and flung his arms round the boy's neck.

'William—kind, good William Penn!' said Rupert. 'Mother, 'tis my friend and

playmate. Goest thou with us into Buckinghamshire?

'Not now,' said Penn, 'but I have tidings for thy mother. Mistress Patience, thy brother Philip Randall is alive. He has escaped, and is in the new country, a free and independent man.'

'Thank God!' exclaimed Patience.

'He was saved,' continued the boy; 'but his poor serving-man suffered death in his cause, and died manfully fighting at his side.'

'Alas, poor March!' Patience's tears fell fast, and her heart ached for the trusty serving-man.

'He died a soldier's death,' said John Howe; 'a death he would have chosen.'

'Did my brother send me any message?' asked Patience.

'He bade me tell you, if you escaped captivity and death, to join him in that great new country across the seas; but if you had——' here the boy faltered.

'Suffered on the gallows,' interposed John Howe.

'Then his longing was to have Gilbert.'

The child coloured up violently. 'Mother, are we going to join Uncle Randall?'

But the question remained unanswered, for Mr. Evelyn was beckoning to John Howe and his wife to enter a hostelry on London Bridge, where they were to refresh themselves and to rest before setting forth on their homeward ride.

Then William Penn took leave of them. As the boy turned to bid them farewell they were struck by that bright, fearless young face, and they remembered it in years to come, when they heard of the magical influence he exerted over the poor ill-treated Indians, and of the hard and laborious life, rendered harder still by his own countrymen, which he led, uncomplaining but sorrowing, in the land across the sea.

Peaceful and happy, the little party proceeded on their homeward journey. They slept at Berkhampstead, resting their weary horses, and made ready to start at an early hour on the following morning. But before they started again a messenger from Tring Park arrived, and commanded the travellers to repair to the royal domain and await the King's pleasure.

'Mother will be a Royalist yet,' said Rupert, slyly. 'But knowest thou, mother, to whom we owe our freedom?'

'To kind friends,' said Patience—'to our kindest friend, Mr. Evelyn.'

'Nay, indeed not, but to my father's brush. A picture has bought thy life, dear father: 'tis real, sober earnest.'

'Mistress Nell!' exclaimed John Howe. 'Oh! Mistress Nell.'

But Patience coloured deeply, and urged her horse into a canter.

An observant passer-by might have noticed that the face of Mistress Patience bore a troubled aspect, and that her smooth brow was somewhat clouded. She would have received His Majesty, with his whole court, in her own dwelling without the slightest hesitation; but appearing before him in one of his favourites' houses was galling to her nature. It touched all the dignity of the Puritan wife and mother, and she turned red at the very thought of having to be grateful to Nell Gwynn.

John Howe, with his light and joyous disposition, did not enter into his wife's feelings, and could only linger with rapture over the sudden transition from captivity to freedom.

The two boys rode on gaily by the side of old Martin, and their voices rose into a burst of delight, as the gates of the Park

were thrown open, and they entered the broad and shady avenue which led up to the house. The travellers were met at the door by a man-at-arms, who requested them to dismount, and offered to lead them to His Majesty. Passing along the terrace walk they found themselves approaching a low-roofed farmhouse with pointed gables, latticed window, and broad, dark beams. From the farm-building came the hum of voices, and at intervals a low, rippling laugh. The man-at-arms walked on, and entering a capacious yard, swung back a heavy door, thereby revealing a pretty picture.

On a smooth grass-plot in front of the farm, beneath the shade of an old walnut-tree, a rustic table was laid, and beside it stood a young girl, exquisitely pretty, and dressed as a milkmaid. Bowls of frothy, creamy, fresh milk, evidently just drawn from some beautiful cows grazing in the meadow, stood upon the table ; but in the young girl's hand was a flagon of sack, from which she was filling a cup held for her by Charles II. himself. Beside the King stood Buckingham. Both monarch and subject were dressed alike in Cavalier suits, buff coats, with silk scarfs and lace collars.

But the King's scarf was a rose-coloured one, and it matched the rose-coloured knot in Nell's straw hat, whilst Buckingham's was of pale blue.

Upon such a scene did Patience Howe alight. Nell Gwynn's eyes were raised, and she quickly caught the artist's glance. She placed the flagon on the table, and with an impetuous exclamation rushed forward and seized John Howe by the hand.

'Your Majesty——' she began.

But John Howe had already bent his knee, and his lips touched, in heartfelt gratitude, the outstretched hand of his King.

Hardly daring to trust his voice, he pointed to his children and to Patience, the latter colourless as the stone upon which she stood.

'Well, well,' said the King gaily, 'so you have escaped from those worthy judges, and our pardon found its way through the Tower gates? But remember,' he added, looking at Patience, 'that it was a favour, and that another such favour it might be impossible to grant.'

'Your Majesty,' said Patience, bravely, 'great and unutterably good was the favour shown to me, and my gratitude is un-

bounded; but my husband shared my captivity through no fault of his, and had he been led to the scaffold it would have been a crime.'

'Hush, Patience!' said John Howe.

The King coloured angrily.

'The wife should be obedient to her husband, Mistress Howe. We counsel your practising this wifely duty; and to mark your good intentions, we should recommend true and sincere loyalty to the Crown.'

'Your Majesty may be sure of that,' said Patience: 'I owe to your goodness the lives of those dearest to me.'

Meanwhile Nell Gwynn had seized upon a basket of strawberries, and had called Rupert and Gilbert to her side. She began to draw the strawberries from the leaves, staining her fingers and feeding the boys. Gilbert looked shy and alarmed, but Rupert was at his ease, and took the fruit with pleasure.

Suddenly she caught Patience's eye, and her cheek flushed. She set down the basket upon the table, and putting her hand on Rupert's shoulder, said, 'So that is thy mother, boy?' Patience reddened with vexation. Nell advanced, and holding out a dimpled hand and arm bare to the elbow,—

'You have a pretty son,' said she, smiling, 'and one who loves his parents.'

'Oh! mother, say a word of thanks,' urged Rupert; 'Mistress Gwynn was good to us!'

'Then I will be good to Mistress Gwynn,' said Patience; 'but I would fain say my thanks to her alone, for I trow two women cannot speak together before His Majesty.'

'Fill my glass again, sweet Nell. I thirst,' said the King.

Nell turned blithely, filled up the glass, and then whispered something into Charles's ear, whilst a curl of her hair hung fluttering over his shoulder.

'As thou will'st, child,' said the King, smoothing the curl, and bidding John Howe approach.

The artist was gazing at his wife and Nell Gwynn in astonishment and perplexity. Nell, asking Patience to accompany her, left the little group, and walking a short way came to a secluded spot. Here she paused, and turning her bright blue eyes on Patience, said gaily,—

'Will you thank me for your pardon here, good Mistress? for I swear that I gained it for you.'

'Indeed I will,' answered Patience, 'and if thou wilt listen to me, my thanks will not be mere empty words. No, they shall bring blessings on thy head thou little dreamest of.'

'Thou speakest in riddles.'

'Nay, nay, Mistress Gwynn, no riddles; but my heart aches for thee. Thou art a woman like me, and yet so unlike me. Had I been led to the scaffold, or to the stake, I should be happier than thou art now.'

'Good heavens, no!' said Nell, quickly; 'I am happy.'

'I grieve for thee if thou art,' said the artist's wife.

'Nay, Mistress Howe, you are wasting of your pity.'

'Oh, listen, while it may yet be time, not to poor Patience Howe, but to the voice of thy conscience, or to the voice of God. Leave all this false glitter and paint and show.'

'You speak as once your husband spake to me before, and——' Nell Gwynn stopped short and sighed.

'Did he?' said Patience; 'then do what he wished—what I implore.'

'And change my own merry self into a sad, sour Puritan? Nay, nay. I am the

King's Nell, his sweet Nelly, his flower, his rosebud. Thou wouldest have me fling myself away into some roadside inn, some village hut, and be a lonely, sad, miserable wench. What! leave the light, the sunshine of my life? What harm do I do to such as thou art?'

'The great, fearful harm of making God's handiwork despicable in our sight. Oh, vain, unhappy girl!' exclaimed Patience, 'thou shalt listen while there is yet time. Mend thine ungodly ways, and try to return to the narrow path. Thou wilt have to walk over thorns, and thy feet will bleed, but in thine heart will be peace and rest. Be modest in thy dress,' said Patience, looking at the girl's white neck; 'be modest in thy speech, lowly in thy ways, and God may still forgive thee.'

Nell raised her head defiantly; her eyes shone with an angry flame; she tried to speak, but wept instead.

'I cannot,' she said.

'With God's help there is nothing we cannot do. He will help thee to subdue the vain wishes of the flesh, the evil longings of thy nature. But thou must flee from here. Leave them all—leave all who have led thee astray.'

'I cannot,' said Nell, tremulously.

'Thou must. My freedom from the Tower I owe to thee—thy freedom from sin thou shalt owe to me; and when the hour of death comes, thou wilt thank me as I thank thee to-day.'

'Death! Oh, speak not so,' said Nell, shivering.

'Nay, but it will come, and thou must and shalt be saved. Oh! God,' said the Puritan, sinking upon her knees, 'I will pray for this woman's soul.'

Then Nell, awed by this strange scene, burst into hysterical weeping, and clung like a child to the older woman; but there was no responsive prayer in her heart, and there was only a feeling of dread which overpowered her.

'Thou hast a dread of darkness and captivity,' continued Patience, 'but thou livest in darkness, and thy soul is held captive by sin. I bring thee light and freedom! I will strike off thy fetters; come with me.'

Then Nell spoke out from all the anguish of her heart,—'Go from here? I go with thee? No, no, I cannot. I am not good as thou art, Mistress Howe, but I am true, and cannot go from here. May

God forgive me! But thou hast spoken in love and kindness, and though thy words were hard, thy heart was good towards me; and to show thee that I hold thee dear, I will never bandy a light word with thy Rupert, and will warn him when in peril. Think not badly of poor Nell Gwynn. I must even love thee, for thou hast taken my hand instead of spurning me away.'

Then Patience did an inexplicable act. She bent forwards and kissed Nell's cheek. 'Mistress Gwynn,' she cried, 'I will save thee yet. Thou shalt come with me.'

But Nell had sprung to her feet, and pushing back her curls, ran towards the farm-house. She had heard the King's voice. It was her bad angel.—Good angels above, ready to weep with joy over one repentant sinner, hide your faces and mourn!

Alas, poor Nell! And yet we may hope that she too—she, poor victim of evil days—may have been saved, though not then, as thou didst wish, good Patience Howe.

But the voice of the Puritan wife echoed long in the hearing of Nell Gwynn, and the remembrance of her face and form seemed impressed upon the girl's vision. That remembrance may have worked a potent spell,

and may have fought with some success against the powers of evil; for nothing is lost,—no tear of pity, no word of kindness, no deed of love.

But the actors have all passed away, and have left the scene on which they played their little parts: Sir Peter Lely and John Howe have resigned the brush to another and yet another generation of artists; and Nell Gwynn, orange-girl, actress, and Court favourite—saucy, bewitching Nell—has swept off *her* stage,—has left her home among the fair beech-woods of Tring.

Tring Park, with its slopes and avenues and beech-trees and wooded heights, remains, and the old hall resounds to the patter of little feet, to the echo of childish voices; and a golden-haired boy, with the smile of gentle innocence on his parted lips, and a bright, blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked little girl, play and run and frolic in the gallery where once loud and coarse voices resounded, and the merry monarch feasted among the riotous and profligate favourites of his Court.

Nell Gwynn's face still looks out from her frame, but some say that it is a copy of John Howe's sketch, painted by the spirited brush of Romney.

I was gazing at it but lately, when thoughts of those old days came back to me, of those strange times which seem so far distant now ; and ghosts came trooping from all corners of the old house, taking the shapes of Puritan and Cavalier, and, somehow or other, I seemed to hear from them the story of Nell Gwynn's picture.

As I left the dark old hall where the shadows of evening were gathering, I strolled out upon the lawn, still radiant in the golden light of the setting sun.

I seemed to have left the past behind me, enfolded in darkness, hidden in mysterious shadows, whilst before me lay the present, full of light and hope.

I paused to gaze at the group I saw upon the lawn.

Two parents were standing beside their children, who were feeding a motley flock of beautiful birds. Pheasants shining with gold, sapphire-breasted peacocks with brilliant fan-like tails, flamingoes, crimson as the setting sun, doves of a tender grey, and pigeons of creamy white with rosy breasts, parrots gorgeous like the robes of an oriental monarch, all came hovering, fluttering, flying, and perching round the children, forming a magic circle of many-tinted wings.

The slanting rays of the sun burnished the feathers of the birds, and cast a golden halo on the children's heads.

Gaze with me for a moment upon the scene, reader, until the shadows close upon it, until it also becomes a picture of the past.

Aston Clinton, 1878.

THE DUMB MAIDEN OF CREMONA

DEDICATED TO

MADAME NORMAN NÉRUDA

(LADY HALLÉ)

THE DUMB MAIDEN OF CREMONA.

A GREAT many years ago there dwelt in the city of Cremona a Syndic with a beautiful daughter. Giovanna was known by all the town for her beauty, which was of so rare and high an order that painters had asked her to sit to them for the picture of the Holy Virgin. But, alas! she was pitied as much as she was admired, for she was dumb. She had been born with this sad affliction, but, strange to say, she had not the double burden to bear of deafness and dumbness, and the Syndic had always hoped that she might be cured, and that speech would be given to her, as sight was sometimes given to the blind. He had therefore consulted all the great physicians of the land, and he had offered treasures of gold and silver to the fortunate man who could possibly effect the happy transformation; but such a physician had never yet been found, and at the age of seventeen Giovanna was the loveliest girl in Cremona, but mute as ever.

Giovanna was not only gifted with a

rare power of hearing, but she had also an ear which was keenly alive to music, and most susceptible to sweet sounds. When quite a child she would spend hours in the cathedral, listening to the choristers practising for some festival, and taking a strange pleasure in the accompaniment of the various instruments. Her old nurse Lisa would often drop asleep whilst her little charge listened devoutly, following each variation of the theme, each change of the air with an attention beyond her years. In fact, so deep was her interest in these performances, that she begged as a gift a small violin, on which she strove to imitate the sounds she had heard. And frequently she tried to master the difficulties of her instrument, which was of a rude and uncouth description. So constant was her attendance in the church, that the priests called her the little saint of the cathedral whose name she bore, and as she was generally dressed in blue and white she was looked upon as a votary to the Virgin. As she grew older, she felt herself to be more and more debarred from joining the other young girls of Cremona in all their amusements and occupations; and as she seemed to live more than ever the life of a recluse, the priests and

the bishops were soon urging the Syndic to let his daughter take the veil and live among the cloistered nuns. But the fond and doting father would not give his consent. Giovanna was his only child, the apple of his eye, her beauty was not to be immured in a living tomb, she was not to cut off her golden glory, and to hide her sweet face under the veil of the stern sisterhood. If Giovanna never wore the bridal wreath, she should at least remain to be the delight and treasure of his home.

When Giovanna was about eight years of age, the choir of the cathedral had been celebrated far and wide for the beautiful voice of one of its choristers. So sweet, so pure and penetrating was that voice, that it seemed to many as if an angel from heaven had been singing; and when the child grew older and could no longer sing, the choir came down to a very earthly level, and soon failed to draw the townsfolk and strangers to hear it. Giovanna had of course been attracted by this voice, and Antonio had seen and noticed the little lady of the cathedral, as he called her. But the Syndic's daughter was as far removed from the poor chorister in the social scale, as he was literally removed from her when he

took his place behind the screen, whilst she knelt far below amongst the people. Antonio was an orphan, and none knew his parentage, save the good bishop of Cremona, who had the child educated in the monastery. At the age of fifteen the little singer left his place in the choir and departed from Cremona, but not before he had been to bid an affectionate farewell to his kind friend the bishop. He did not find him alone as he had fancied, but the Syndic and his daughter Giovanna were with him, and Giovanna was playing on her little violin. As the mute child brought forth the tones from her instrument, the strange contradiction struck Antonio forcibly, and he was so much moved by her misfortune that he stood thoughtfully and entranced before her.

'Pray, Antonio, what are you brooding over?' said the bishop kindly.

The boy blushed, and then said simply: 'I was thinking that I should like to go in quest of a voice for that little lady.'

'An unsuccessful search,' said the Syndic, sighing.

'At any rate, I may find her a better voice than that one,' said Antonio, pointing to the violin. 'Give me good speed, father.' The bishop held forth his hand and blessed

the boy, then telling him to await his directions, he accompanied the Syndic and Giovanna to the door.

Years had passed since Antonio had gone forth into the world. The old bishop his friend and patron had left Cremona for Rome, and no one else seemed to have thought or remembrance of the little chorister.

One Easter Sunday, when spring had burst into full bloom, the cathedral bells were ringing out a joyous brilliant peal, and a great crowd streamed in through the widely opened church door. The Syndic was one of the first, and by his side walked Giovanna, with the full sunlight pouring in upon her. She was dressed in blue, with a white cloak falling from her shoulders, whilst a lace veil covered her golden hair, which was gathered back by a broad blue band. On her breast glittered a diamond cross, and she carried a nosegay of early roses in her hand, roses that were dewy and soft and bright with bloom, as sweet and as fair as the maiden herself. As she approached the basin filled with holy water, a youth stood there before her, and, according to the custom of the gallant cavaliers of the day, he dipped his finger into the

water and held it out towards the maiden. She took the proffered drop and raised her eyes in thanks. The youth gazed, started, and drew back to let her pass on. That this lovely maiden could be the little lady of the cathedral, seemed well nigh impossible, and for the moment Antonio, for he it was, could not imagine who Giovanna might be. But the first tones of the music brought back his wandering senses, and he fell to thinking that the choristers were not what they should be, and that the violins scraped and groaned in a most unmelodious manner. In fact the youth was in no devotional frame of mind, and would have left the cathedral before the mass was over, had he not wished to see that beautiful face again. When Giovanna passed him for the second time her head was bent, and she never raised her eyes. The youth, hurrying on with the stream, was calling out upon his ill luck, when a sudden gleam at his feet attracted his attention; the diamond cross lay upon the ground which had so lately hung from the girl's throat. He stooped, raised it, held it lightly in his hand; then he stopped the first passer-by and asked who was the fair maiden, just then walking down the street. 'Why, the Syndic's

daughter,' was the answer. The youth looked incredulous, but after some hesitation, pursued his way to the house of the Syndic. He was admitted by the servant, and presented himself with head uncovered. He produced the cross directly, and, placing it before the old man, who was resting in his arm-chair, asked the unnecessary question, whether his daughter had lost the jewel in the cathedral.

The Syndic seized it eagerly. 'And who may you be, most honest sir?' he demanded, with the bauble in his hand.

'A stranger, a traveller, but none the less honest,' answered the youth evasively; 'they call me Straduarius, and I have only just arrived from the north, but my country is Italy, and I know none so fair.'

'Right welcome to us!' exclaimed the Syndic; 'and now I will call my daughter, who shall thank you for your courtesy in her own peculiar way. Giovanna! Giovanna!' and the girl appeared with a rapid step and with anxious look, for she was aware of her loss.

As she entered the room, her father held forth the jewel, and said: 'Careless Giovanna! go and thank the stranger who has brought back the cross.'

Then Giovanna came forward, and putting her hand to her heart dropped a little curtsey to the youth, and never thought for a moment that it was Antonio the chorister.

If she was mute, he seemed to share her affliction, and the red colour which mounted into his cheeks suddenly suffused hers and rushed up to her forehead.

Antonio was a youth of gentle mien and of courteous manner, thus little wonder that he should have shared the noontide meal, and that a place was speedily found for him at the Syndic's table and beside the Syndic's daughter. So he set to work to amuse the dumb maiden, and oftentimes he saw a smile rippling over her face like sunshine on a landscape, and a bright flash in her blue eyes which intoxicated him far more than the *vino d'Asti* which he quaffed. And then he felt as if he should have liked that meal to have lasted for ever. But it came to an end, and Giovanna was about to rise and return to her own withdrawing-room, when Antonio told her that he had heard in Cremona of her love for music, and how she could play on the violin like a very St. Cecilia. The Syndic liking to hear his daughter praised, bade her fetch the instrument for the stranger to hear her. Giovanna

instantly obeyed, and soon reappearing with her violin, began one of the quaint old-fashioned melodies so popular at that period. But do what she would, the violin was hard and uncouth, and Antonio listened with a strange thrill of hope; he was quite over-joyed to find how bad it was, and how the girl laboured at the resisting sounds. So much the greater was her merit, and Antonio praised her accordingly.

'And do you not play or sing?' asked the Syndic, when the melody had softly died away.

'Alas, no! I am but a mechanic and minister to art in a very humble way.'

'Do you intend remaining at Cremona?'

'Yes, for the present; I have obtained a room in that strange old tumble-down palace, which people here call La Desolazione, on the very outskirts of the town.'

'Ha, ha,' laughed the Syndic, 'you have strange tastes.'

'Not so strange as they seem,' said the youth with a bow; and then he thanked the old man cordially, and left him to his rest.

Antonio evidently enjoyed his tumble-down palace; he rose early, went late to his couch, and worked as hard as the poorest

mechanic. But his workshop was high up in a turret, and his work a mystery. He grew pale and thin over it; he was hardly seen by any one, but he had evidently a great joy and happiness in his heart, for his smile was radiant and his eye bright. Occasionally he would be seen in the cathedral, and oftener in the house of the Syndic, where he had established a pleasant footing. Then he would hear Giovanna play her violin, and would give her advice, and once he actually took the bow from her fingers, but then suddenly remembering himself, he gave it back again and let her finish the melody. Yet all the while he seemed too busy and too preoccupied to fall in love with her.

Several weeks he spent in complete solitude at the Desolazione, for the Syndic and his daughter were passing the glorious summer at the lakes. At last, one day, when Antonio was walking down the streets of Cremona, he met the Syndic, who accosted him cheerfully and bade him return home with him. As they approached the house, they saw Giovanna leaning out of the window, with her golden head uncovered.

'Is not Giovanna the most beautiful girl you have ever seen?' asked the admiring father.

'In faith, she is so.'

'Well, at last she has a suitor.'

'Has she?' said Antonio, with a grim smile.

'Yes, a suitor from Bologna, who would give her a palace, and gold, and silver, and all the delights of life.'

'Indeed!' said Antonio, 'but could he give her a voice?' The Syndic stared. 'For if not, I know of one who would. Yes, one who would give her the voice of an angel itself; trust Giovanna to me for a few hours of each day, and when that pale crescent appears a full glorious moon, then that voice shall be heard.'

'You are talking in riddles,' said the Syndic, with a laugh; 'and what answer meanwhile to the wealthy suitor?'

'Bid him wait the time agreed upon.'

'Absurd!' said the Syndic, 'I shall bid him come and court his bride.'

Which he would probably have done, had not the Syndic fallen ill, and Giovanna forbidden the house to all visitors. Meanwhile the Bolognese suitor had taken up his abode in Cremona, and was awaiting the day when he might come and dazzle the girl's eyes with the jewels he had brought her. One evening she was taking the air

in the garden, when she heard a voice calling her, begging, imploring admittance. She opened the gate: Antonio stood before her. He carried something in his hand.

'Signorina,' he said, approaching her, 'I have brought you a voice in this case, but I must teach you to use it.'

She looked up in astonishment.

'Do you remember that day, a long time ago, when you were playing your little violin to the good bishop, a poor chorister was listening to you then, and he vowed that he would go and search the world over for a worthier voice for you? I have kept that vow. Ah, Signorina, Antonio Straduarius has returned from his wanderings with the secret of a dying man. I believe that I have found fame, riches, and honour, but I only care for your love, and you will give me that for the voice which nature forgot to bestow upon you, but which you will receive from me. Do you remember that day when you dropped your cross? That was your faith which I took and held, and when I gave it you back it had been warmed by my love. O! sweet Giovanna, the voice is awaiting you. Come where we can be alone and undisturbed.'

Then the girl, crimson with shame and

delight, seized the youth's hand, and drew him along to a small pavilion at the end of the terrace ; it was fitted up as a little music room, and was Giovanna's own domain. She watched Antonio as he opened the case and lifted from it a small but beautifully shaped violin, which he placed in her hands. She drew the bow across it, and a soft wail of music was the result. She tried a simple chaunt: the sound was sweet, beautiful, tuneful. Antonio was on his knees, and his eyes were full of tears.

'Dearest Giovanna,' he said, 'play every evening for a short hour on this little violin, and let me come to this pavilion to hear you. The Syndic shall count me a worthy rival of the Bolognese count.'

She looked up at him with a smile—he bent forward, and kissing her fair hair, was gone in an instant. Faithfully the two kept the trysting hour, until at last Giovanna was fairly perfect in her playing, and the violin gave out a tone so sweet and rich that Antonio's very heart leapt for joy.

'Enough, we must go to your father together,' exclaimed the youth upon that evening. Mad with delight, he took the girl's hand,—they traversed the terrace walk, and entered the house.

'Courage!' he whispered to her, as he opened the door of the Syndic's room.

The old man sat in his arm-chair, and beside him was a stranger in a priest's dress. They both started at the two who entered simultaneously.

'The Signorina has found her voice!' exclaimed the happy Antonio; 'play, Giovanna mia!'

Then the Syndic heard a sweet melodious strain, and, gazing at his daughter, he noticed that she had abandoned her favourite colour, and that her blue bow was replaced by a crimson rose.

'Antonio, my little chorister,' said the good bishop, for he was the stranger in the priestly garb, 'nay, I forget,—Antonio Straduarius, a name which will be celebrated ere long. You see your message has been answered in person. I came, Antonio, to remove all scruples from the Syndic's mind.'

So the rich suitor was sent away by the happy maiden, and she devoted herself to Antonio, who became a great and famous man. But he declared to his last day, that had it not been for the little voiceless daughter of the Syndic, he would not have won his world-wide renown. Did he guess that the

voice which he had found would become immortal,—that it is still sounding with deep, impassioned, glorious notes, to gladden and cheer and enchant many and many a heart,—and that the secret of that voice has never been discovered, but lies buried in the grave of Straduarius ?

IN MEMORIAM

LEOPOLD DE ROTHSCHILD.*

A GLORIOUS day at the close of the month of May : the sky at its bluest, the birds singing ioyously overhead, and every tree and shrub crowned with leaf and blossom. Nature giving with a generous hand that which she had withheld for so long and with such tenacity. Winter vanquished at last by summer!

In the very midst of those glad outpourings of that bounteous May day, within a garden which it would be hard to match for loveliness and charm, stands a home which, darkened, curtained, and silent, seemed strangely at variance with the call of awakened nature.

Within that home lay one whose heartbeats were stilled, and whose eyes were closed to the gladsome sights without. One who had passionately loved that enchanting abode, set in the midst of the far-spreading Vale with its fair pasture-lands stretching away for miles, with its sloping park not enclosed by jealous walls, but lying in friendly proximity to a typical English village, amongst whose inhabitants the owner of

* Reprinted from the *Bucks Herald.*

Ascott had lived for many happy years, caring for them, sympathising with them in their sorrows, sharing in their joys, taking part in their sports, tending them when sick, helping them to face the battles of life, and above all teaching them by example how to live honourably and nobly.

It was the close of a beautiful life at the opening hours of a beautiful day. Birth and death. Twin sisters! And as Nature seemed awakening and being set free from the thraldom of winter's grasp, so it seemed to some of those who loved him best as if his spirit were also awakening and being set free from the torturing grasp of pain and suffering.

The writer of these lines knows by lifelong experience how Leopold de Rothschild spent his days in generous, considerate actions, and in words of kindly encouragement. The actions were of so unostentatious a character that they were often unsuspected and indeed unknown, except to those who benefited by them.

There is a great art in giving, and that art was natural to him; he loved to see those around him happy, and often contributed to maintain that happiness, not merely by giving, but by bringing the sunshine of his personality along with his gift. The

key-note of his being was sympathy. Yet in his extreme modesty he would always belittle what he had done, whilst on the other hand he would revert again and again to some trivial act of kindness or charity that had come to his knowledge, and had stirred his heart. A sympathetic listener who might have heard the tale before could not please him better than by adding his own words of praise to those of the narrator. Many are generous, many are kind, but few have been so universally generous or so considerately kind as he was. To him amenity of speech and manner was a very real asset. Alas! how often is it laid on one side even by the best-intentioned people. There is a generosity of the heart as well as of the purse, and if something of the giver's own personality is tendered with the gift the value of the latter is enhanced twofold. Well did Lowell say :—

> 'Not what we give, but what we share,
> For the gift without the giver is bare.'

Far be it from me to attempt anything in the shape of a memoir, or even a sketch of Leopold de Rothschild and his happy, useful life. To others I leave the task of enumerating his many excellent qualities of heart

and head, the various points at which he touched life, and they were many; the interest he took in country pursuits, in his garden, in his dogs, his taste for sport, his unbounded hospitality, his concern in village matters, his deep and abiding love for, and pride in, his race and faith; above all, his unwavering affection for his friends and kinsfolk, his devotion to his wife and sons, and to his two elder brothers—these have all been commented upon by abler pens than mine, but as one who claims to have known him from childhood, who was associated with him, not only in hours of sunny happiness, but also in those of sorrow and darkness, I may be permitted to add this feeble tribute to his dear memory.

May 29th, 1917.

Capt. The Hon. NEIL PRIMROSE.
Major EVELYN ROTHSCHILD.*

IT has become the fashion of late years to attend what are called 'Memorial Services' for dear ones who have passed from this earth. Many, who are unable to be present at the last sad rites, feel a mournful satisfaction in meeting together to do honour to the dead, and to soothe their own over-wrought feelings by spending a quiet period in a hallowed place of worship in prayerful devotion. The beautiful 90th Psalm, read or chanted on these occasions, should fall on no unheeding ear. It is then that our beloved dead seem to be still with us, lingering on until the last faint notes of the chant or the words of the prayer have floated into silence.

Such moments may be precious to the mourners; but not all are able to be present who might wish to show their affection and respect for those who are gone. This may be some excuse for my venturing to place on record a few words in remembrance of Neil Primrose and Evelyn Rothschild.

The two cousins and friends, who have fallen on the same battlefield in the land of

* Reprinted from the *Westminster Gazette.*

Palestine, have left fragrant memories behind them. To the one the romance of the situation must have forcibly presented itself on that fatal morning, when he knew that, in company with the Bucks Hussars, he was advancing towards the Holy City, the very spot where his ancestors had once worshipped in the Temple that had contained the Holy of Holies glorified by the Divine Presence. England, the land of civil and religious liberty, has for many a long day given a home to the Jews, who have repaid her hospitality by devoted and ungrudging service in many fields.

And now a young and brave member of a Jewish family was to offer up the supreme sacrifice almost within sight of the old home of his race. Many orthodox members of the Jewish community have, since time immemorial, requested that at their death a little soil from the Holy Land should be placed in their coffins, and this has repeatedly been done. But this young soldier, with his inheritance of fine and noble qualities, with his love for his family, his affection for his beautiful country home, and his readiness to serve his community as well as his country, was prepared to lay down his life on that very soil which his forefathers

had wrested after many a long struggle from races whom we know but by their names. And it was that hallowed soil that received him as he fell. There also his cousin, to whom he was devotedly attached, gave his life for his country. Descended on his mother's side from the same Jewish family, he must likewise have experienced a romantic thrill in the advance. But, alas! the Angel of Death has silenced the voices that might have sounded triumphantly in our ears, bringing us the glad tidings of how the Turks were overthrown and how the British were victorious.

Both friends who have fallen were brave in conduct, modest in character, and richly endowed in heart and mind. They might both have remained in England with no detriment to their honour. I believe it is no secret that they had both been offered home appointments and pressed to stay, but they heard and obeyed the inward voice that called them to the post of danger, and they went indeed with those

> . . . . . who suffer'd countless ills,
> Who battled for the True, the Just,
> 'Were' blown about the desert dust,
> Or seal'd within the iron hills.

November, 1917.

A. DE R.

Adieu ! dear friend, 'tis hard to see thee go,
To see thee quit thy beauteous home on earth,
Beloved and loving here, e'en since thy birth,
To many a heart thy going forth brings woe.
What happiness didst thou not erst bestow !
What times of gladsome cheeriness and mirth !
When thou wast host there never was a dearth
Of kindly hospitality and cheer, a flow
Of gracious courtesy, a welcome kind
To all alike whom e'er thou claim'st as guest.
How keen of wit thou wast, how shrewd of mind !
How quick to know whatever Art held best !
How truly generous to search and find
The word and gift to set a heart at rest !

February, 1918.

CONSTANCE, MARCHIONESS OF LOTHIAN.*

A FEW miles beyond Gunton lies the picturesque village of Ingworth, leading to that paradise of country seats—Blickling. The owner of that paradise, in the year 1877, was Constance, Marchioness of Lothian, widow of the eighth Marquis, a Talbot by birth and sister of my friends, Lady Pembroke and Lady Brownlow. I had met Lady Lothian before the year 1877 at Ashbridge, but I felt that her true setting was Blickling Hall, where she formed the centre of a beautifully harmonious picture.

Interesting and beautiful as Blickling Hall, with its glorious garden and picturesque woods, undoubtedly is, its greatest interest for me lay in the fact that it was the home of the beloved châtelaine, who spent the years of her widowhood there, amongst the people who loved and revered her. She belonged to the class of 'Grandes Dames,' alas! almost vanished from our midst, keeping to the dress, manners, and speech of the mid-Victorian days. Her

*Reprinted from the *Eastern Daily Press*, October, 1901.

delicate and aristocratic beauty was only heightened by the dress she habitually wore: the plain, yet sweeping lines of her skirt, with the lace Mantilla or shady hat on her head. I never saw her in any garment but black, until the last sad day, when I was taken into the room where she lay, like a finely-sculptured marble image, upon her bed, a great bunch of lilies upon her breast and palm branches overhanging her pillow.

From 1877 until 1901, the year of her death, I saw Lady Lothian at frequent intervals, each time being struck, no less by her beauty and nobility of feature, than by her distinction of mind and spirit. I still possess the little note I received from her after my first visit with my mother to Blickling, in which occur these words:

'It was a great pleasure to me to see you and your mother. I shall most certainly avail myself of your kind invitation to see you again in London or when I go to Ashridge.' (In those days there was no question of my living in Norfolk.) 'I should like nothing better than to talk over some of the little schemes I have had for helping people. May I beg to be remembered to your mother whom I felt so glad to be introduced to, and I do hope that her wide interest in so many subjects, helps to give her strength to bear the weight of the trials which have come to her, as to me. You

must not let this first visit to Cromer be your last.'

Indeed, this kind wish of Lady Lothian's was realised, and I never came down to my Norfolk home without planning when I could meet the Mistress of Blickling. Many of my friends and acquaintances of diverse views and opinions shared in my admiration for Lady Lothian, and enjoyed her hospitality; thus in a letter from Lord Morley, dated December, 1880, I read the following:

'My visit to Blickling was very pleasant indeed to me at least. What a charming old house it is, and though the conservative element prevailed in the party, I liked it none the less on that account.'

Lady Lothian's death, which occurred after a very short illness in October, 1901, came as a fearful blow to those who knew and loved her. Widespread and sincere was the mourning. Indeed, her loss to her tenants and cottagers was a very severe one. Blickling Hall is now a forsaken building, closed to the wayfarer and tripper.* I believe that even Queen Alexandra found it almost impossible to gain entrance, when she was anxious to explore the gardens. No other member of the Lothian family has

* It has recently found a tenant (1921).

inhabited the Hall. The present Peer is, alas! unable to manage his own affairs, or indeed his own life.

Lady Lothian was conveyed to Scotland after her death, and lies beside her husband in one of the resting-places of the family; but in the little church at Blickling—the church she loved and constantly attended, and where she placed a beautiful memorial in memory of her husband—there is a touching and appropriate inscription to her own memory, although any one who ever had the privilege of knowing her as I did, will require no words to recall her gracious presence:

'In memory of Constance Harriet Mahonesa widow of William Schomberg Robert 8th Marquess of Lothian daughter of Henry John 18th Earl of Shrewsbury and Talbot born June 15th 1836 died October 10th 1901 at Blickling Hall where she had lived during her widowhood of 31 years for and with her people helping uplifting inspiring loving and beloved by all.

'She made the beauty of Holiness manifest.'

LADY BROWNLOW.*

Amongst the beautiful homes of England there is one standing in its own forest land where the beech-trees, denizens of two adjoining counties, climb up the steep ridge of a famous line of chalk hills, losing themselves on common land, which, as May-time approaches, offers its fragrant and golden welcome to the wayfarer. Towns, once small and self-contained, now growing almost into suburbs of our huge metropolis, and villages still speaking of other days and other modes, are nestling at the foot of those beech woods, whilst in the far distance a vale of smooth pasture land stretches out for miles meeting the blue horizon.

Into this most glorious and yet most English of homes, complete with its picturesque village, its brilliant flower garden, its shrubberies and forest setting, its clinging memories of Elizabethan times, there came on a June day in the year 1868 a young and most beautiful bride. All who saw her on that occasion, when by the side of her husband she stepped into the home of which

* Reprinted from the *Bucks Herald*, March, 1917.

she was to be mistress for nearly fifty years, were drawn towards her, not only by her great and unquestionable beauty, but also by a singular charm of manner, a shy gentleness, an anxiety on her part to delight and to win all those who were grouped in the great hall of Ashridge House waiting to receive her. They took her at once into their hearts —neighbours, tenants, villagers, and dependents—and there she reigned supreme, loving and beloved, never to be displaced. And whilst still beautiful with the beauty of age, the beauty of a pure, unsullied nature, she has passed from our sight, one, a friend of many years' standing, who had known her in her girlhood and her married life, attempts to place on record some slight picture of Adelaide Talbot, Countess Brownlow.

Of the four sisters, daughters of the 18th Earl of Shrewsbury and Talbot—Lady Victoria Talbot, the Marchioness of Lothian, the Countess of Pembroke, and the Countess Brownlow, all distinguished in appearance, all remarkable for stateliness and grace of figure—the youngest, Lady Brownlow, was perhaps the most perfect in actual beauty; with her commanding height, her well-poised head, her delicate features, her dark hair and deep blue eyes, she could not have

passed unnoticed in a crowd. And yet she never sought to attract attention or to dominate society by her presence. It would be difficult to describe her—she was perfectly natural and unaffected, but her simple charm of manner, added to her radiant beauty, made her irresistible. She was unconscious of her own powers and most humble about herself. She possessed the great gift of sympathy, perhaps in a higher degree than is bestowed upon most people. Human beings, as such, interested her greatly, but I believe she was most deeply drawn to those who were unhappy, suffering or needing much that the world gives to its more fortunate ones. For, as she often said, the world she knew was divided into two sections: there were the happy and prosperous ones; there were those in need or in sorrow; and she felt her heart go forth most keenly to the latter. She herself never attempted any personal public work, such as would have entailed attendance upon committees or meetings, and she was far too shy to take part in speaking on platforms, but she appreciated good work done by others of a public character, and was often warm in their praise. In fact, the friend who is writing these lines remembers how upon one

occasion (a prize-giving day), Lady Brownlow encouraged her in saying a few words of advice and of praise to the young girl students of the High School at Berkhamsted, and how eagerly she listened to and discussed with her friend the address prepared for that event.

To the cottagers on her husband's manifold and far-spreading estates she proved indeed to be the friend who never failed them. It was one of her truest pleasures to discover the very thing that would bring the greatest joy into a poor or shadowed life. But not only to those who claimed her care in the homesteads of Hertfordshire and Lincolnshire did she prove a loyal friend, but also to the homely Scottish women in the far-off Highland glen where for many a summer-time she spent happy, unforgettable days. How she chatted and laughed with the old ladies at their knitting—for she could laugh as merrily as a child and be amused as a child, simply with simple joys. Her intense sympathy with those in trouble and distress caused her to suffer almost too keenly with their sufferings, and of late years specially, to her own hurt.

She had an intense love of nature which found expression, not only in the joy with

which she would spend hours in the beautiful gardens of Ashridge and of Belton, that owed so much to her inspiration, but also in the rapture with which she greeted a fine sunset, a glorious woodland scene of the Chiltern Hills, or the Highland views of her Scottish home. Although not gifted with the power of artistic execution which Lord Brownlow possesses in a high degree (a legacy from his gifted mother, Lady Marion Alford), Lady Brownlow had the true artistic sense, of which the room where she mostly lived and thought was a striking proof. It was, in fact, a keen sense of the divine power of beauty, added to the desire of introducing some tangible and practical expression of the same into the lives of the people of England that, combined with Lord Brownlow's great knowledge of art and genius for organisation, produced the Association for Home Arts and Industries which for many years has held its annual exhibition in the Albert Hall. The work shown there, steadily improving from year to year, is an unmistakable proof that the love of art and good workmanship exists in many cottage homes throughout the country, and it redounds to the credit of Lady Brownlow and of her husband that they

should have inaugurated this educative and ennobling work.

Beloved as she was by rich and by poor, by the great ones of the earth, and by the humble and lowly unknown to fame, she never lost her sweet simplicity of manner or her utter selflessness. She never thought an unkind thought or uttered a bitter word against any one who might differ from her in views or actions. But her silent disapproval, as well as her steady influence for good, carried untold weight, and indeed, evil could hardly hold up its head where her footstep was passing.

Upon that perfect and beautiful married life I do not dare to touch ; her home, from the very first day when she entered it to the last sad day of her leaving it, was indeed a home in the true sense of the word. Some slight but telling mention of the home at Ashridge occurs in the diary of the famous Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester, which I quote :

'Ashbridge, December 10th, 1872.—This is always a charming house—*he* so good, so true and kind, and *she* quite bright in her beauty and loveliness.'

Indeed, all who were her bidden guests, and they were many, will long remember

the greeting—courteous, and deferential to the old, warm and spontaneous to the young—that was given by one whose beauty of form and of face was but in harmony with her loving heart and her pure and noble soul.

LADY BIDDULPH OF LEDBURY.

AN APPRECIATION.*

LADY BIDDULPH, whose death took place on Thursday, January 13th, 1916, the wife of Lord Biddulph of Ledbury, will long be remembered by those to whom she had been a friend of many years' standing.

Such a friend ventures to place on record, however inadequately, some traits of a very original personality, who played no inconsiderable part in the social life of her country.

When Lady Elizabeth Yorke, the eldest daughter of the 4th Earl of Hardwicke, first appeared in London society she was a very handsome, stately young girl, whose striking face and figure, clear ringing voice, and unusual flow of bright and humorous talk, combined in making her at once a general favourite in the small but select society which at that time had a world-wide renown.

Lady Elizabeth had spent all her early

* Reprinted from *Wings*, the Official Organ of the Women's Total Abstinence Union, March, 1916.

years at Wimpole, for her parents never left their beautiful Cambridgeshire home during the childhood of the numerous members of their family.

Thus London with its many attractions suddenly burst upon the impressionable mind of the young girl, bringing her new avenues of interest and delight when she was best able to appreciate them. Music and song, political and other society, with much stimulating and brilliant conversation, made the year of her *début* a very fascinating one.

She took her part in the many social gatherings of the day, and soon proved that she could hold her own with men and women of intellectual power and ability. She proved an excellent *raconteuse*, with her fine play of countenance, her pleasant and varied intonations of voice, and her strong dramatic talent.

Like the rest of her family, Lady Elizabeth was gifted with great histrionic powers, and at the annual performances at Wimpole during the Christmas holidays she would take to perfection the comic parts. In those days the late Duchess of Teck, mother of Queen Mary, was closely drawn towards the brilliant young girl, and this

friendship only ceased with the life of the Duchess. There occur several passages in the printed and published letters of that Princess, giving an animated account of those happy visits to Wimpole, with its bright bevy of brothers and sisters.

Lady Elizabeth was a good French scholar, and spoke and wrote the French language with very great ease; one of her dearest friends was Lady Ashburton, a sister of the Duc de Bassano, who held high office at the Court of Napoleon III. It was probably as a result of this friendship that Lady Elizabeth, in later years, had many opportunities of intimate conversations with the Empress Eugénie, whose beauty, distinction and misfortunes greatly attracted her.

As a girl, Lady Elizabeth naturally professed the politics of her family, and was proud to call herself an ardent Tory; but after her marriage with Mr. Adeane, one of the leading Liberals of her county, she gradually accepted the Liberal principles of that day, and became a strenuous supporter of many a Liberal measure.

Her husband's long and trying illness, followed by her early widowhood, withdrew her for some time into inevitable seclusion, when the care of her three children proved

her most engrossing occupation. From this, however, she emerged when a mandate came from Queen Victoria appointing her to be one of her Women of the Bedchamber. It was an office she appreciated, for she had a loyal heart; moreover, nearly every member of her family had held, or were holding, posts connected with the Royal Family.

Lady Elizabeth enjoyed her return to a larger and a fuller life, restricted although it was by the Queen's determination not to resume her former social duties. Still, she found much to interest her in the precincts of Windsor Castle, and in the distinguished guests who from time to time made their appearance there. Besides which, or rather above all, her very real and devoted affection for the Queen made this period of her life one upon which she dwelt with satisfaction. Human beings always interested her immensely, books less so; she learned more from conversation than from the written word, and never possessed the habits of close application which we connect with the scholar.

Lady Elizabeth only left Her Majesty's service upon the occasion of her second marriage with the then Michael Biddulph, Esq., a Member of Parliament for S. Here-

fordshire, a widower with four children, two sons and two daughters, to whom she proved the most affectionate and devoted of stepmothers. He was the owner of a beautiful home and estate in the old romantic town of Ledbury, and has since been raised to the Peerage as Lord Biddulph of Ledbury.

Lady Biddulph naturally felt some grief at leaving the service of her Royal Mistress, but this was partly assuaged by the fact that her eldest daughter Marie, now the Honourable Lady Mallet, in a way succeeded her mother in the Royal Household, first as Maid of Honour, and later as Secretary to the Queen.

Her second daughter, Maud, married Mr. John Cator, in the county of Norfolk, who for a time sat as M.P. for S. Huntingdonshire, whilst her son, Charles Adeane, is a well-known figure in Cambridgeshire, of which county he is Lord Lieutenant.

It is impossible for a friend of Lady Biddulph not to dwell upon the warm and generous affection that she gave so liberally to those whom she cared for. She had a loving heart and a noble nature that tolerated nothing small or mean; if she loved, it was devotedly, and she gave the very best of her best self to those she honoured with

her friendship. She would take any amount of trouble to ensure their comfort or happiness, and delighted in receiving them in her own home.

Nor did she neglect or forget her poorer neighbours, to whom she proved a true and thoughtful friend. She took a deep interest in their lives, and consequently in many subjects of social reform. Thus the questions of nurses for the poor, and of Temperance legislation and Temperance Societies, became of paramount importance to her ever-active mind. She was brought into close touch with men and women engrossed in philanthropic work, and acquired a great power of public speech.

Her love of beautiful surroundings never left her, and she devoted much time and attention to the care of her garden and the arrangement of her flowers. As she grew older she became very infirm and somewhat helpless, but her nobility of expression remained with her to the last. Her hair retained much of its early golden tint, her face was always fresh and charming in colour, her eyes bright and expressive.

Occasionally she would speak of the flight of years and of a hand that seemed beckoning to her from the shadows, but

she did not repine or complain; she had a child-like, beautiful faith that had never wavered in spite of many trials and of the sorrow inseparable from the toll of years; she accepted without questioning, and to the last retained the warm and loving heart that found its greatest happiness in the society and the happiness of those she loved best.

FRANCES POWER COBBE.*

I SHALL never forget one bright and sunny afternoon in May, 1875, when a great friend of mine introduced me to Frances Power Cobbe.

'You ought to know her,' she said, 'you would admire and love her; and you have, I know, many subjects in common.'

I went with my friend to a pleasant, cheerful house in Hereford Square, and there in her own drawing-room, which had a comfortable and sociable aspect, I made the acquaintance of a woman who at that time was moving in the midst of all that was most intellectual and delightful.

It was in the very early days of the Anti-Vivisection Movement, that cast so cruel and dark a shadow upon Miss Cobbe's later life, and it was a time when she had taken an assured position as a great thinker, teacher and writer on religious and moral subjects.

My friend mentioned my name; she looked at me curiously for a moment with her searching, piercing glance, and then asked, with a little hesitation, but still hopefully:

* Reprinted from the *Abolitionist*, June 15th, 1904.

'Are you the lady who wrote the book on the Bible for Jewish children?'

I answered that I was, astonished that Miss Cobbe should have been aware of so modest a venture in the field of literature; but, grasping my hand, she said cordially, 'I have read the book, and am so very glad to make your acquaintance.' And acquaintance we did make, which rapidly grew into friendship—a friendship that lasted without a break for nearly thirty years.

Miss Cobbe has not been reticent about her own views on subjects of the deepest interest. She has stated them clearly and distinctly in her early writings: in 'Religious Duty,' 'Broken Lights,' 'Dawning Lights,' 'Hopes of the Human Race: Hereafter and Here,' in numberless articles produced by her ever-busy and delightful pen, that have appeared in papers and magazines, especially in *The Contemporary Review*. That which she wrote she felt keenly; that which she felt she would also speak of with quivering lips, with kindling eyes and heightened colour. She was a deeply religious woman. Her belief in God was profound and remained unshaken. Her belief in the soul of man, in his individual, personal immortality, grew stronger and more vivid with age.

Her hope of union with those she loved and had lost never left her. 'But what would be the loss to the *prestige* of England of the severance of Australia and Canada and India,' she once wrote, 'compared to the loss to mankind of that glorious empery of Immortality in which it has prided itself since the beginning of history? Everything we have achieved and thought: our literature, art, laws, kingdoms and churches have all been wrought and built up in this faith, which has given value to the soul of the humblest child, and added grandeur to the most splendid deeds of the hero and martyr. With that hope disappears not only the consolation of all bereaved hearts, but the very crown upon the head of humanity.'

She who loved the pursuit of Truth for its own sake insisted that if Agnostics or Atheists were sincere in their belief that 'it was but a baseless dream which had deluded our race for so many thousand years, then it behoved them to weep tears, bitter as ever fell from human eyes, over the grave wherein they bury the Divine Love and the Immortal Hope of our miserable race.'

Her tender heart ached over the cruel sufferings from which the poor beasts could not be exempted, and which were intensified

by the modern and scientific spirit of research. This strained her faith to the utmost, but yet it never faltered; and again and again has she assured me that even in her bitterest and darkest moments she looked forward to live again, 'in a world yet unseen, wider, freeer, grander a thousand times than earth, a world which we shall enter whensoever the tide of Death shall lift us up and bear us away.'

How great was her thirst for knowledge for its own sake these few lines quoted from one of her last letters to me may emphasise:

'I think the two sentiments (they may amount to passions) of desire of knowledge, or as we may dignify it, by calling it thirst for truth and hunger for mental food—in youth though wholly personal, are to be reckoned on a par with the social *desire* to *help others*. The one the love of *le vrai*, the other of *le bien*, and altogether with the love of *le beau*, constitute the great trinity of noble human aims. I should never like to represent the study of truth as merely or chiefly undertaken for the sake of fitting ourselves to teach and help others. Knowledge is an end in itself and a most noble one, and I think the more of it as knowledge *pur et simple*, without any extraneous reward

as consequence, either of personal worldly ambition or even of power to do good to others, is scarcely enough cherished, at all events in these days, amongst women. We recognise disinterested devotion to any art with respect, but hardly perhaps enough pure devotion to truth, to knowledge, of what the highest minds have thought and written, and of the wonders of God's universe. The pure joy of it for its own sake and the ennobling thirst for it, apart from all public recognition or advantage to be gained thereby, seem hardly recognised.'

That intense love of knowledge led her into many fields, and made her the truly delightful and inspiring companion she could be; that ardent love of truth gave a clean and cutting edge to her words, and brought her into close conflict with some whom in times gone by she had met in pleasant social intercourse. Her hospitality and her kindness were unbounded; she delighted in making her friends and acquaintances happy. Her beautiful flowers picked from the garden she loved were sent abroad in great boxes; her carriage was constantly at the disposal of some less-fortunate friend; the sunshine of her heart was ever irradiating some dark corner to which it found access.

The big open window of her drawing-room through which the beloved dogs came leaping and bounding; the spacious fields where the horses grazed, and trotted up to her at her bidding; the fragrant room full of comfortable chairs and readable books were outward expressions of her own generous nature, generosity overflowing even to the fact that when she herself was restricted to the severest diet, she seemed more than ever anxious to procure the choicest viands for her guests. She never could forgive my teetotalism; it was, she said, almost churlish to refuse her sparkling Moselle—'so unintoxicating, such a friendly, sociable wine.'

She regretted never having learnt the Welsh tongue, so that she was unable to converse with the people who lived all around her; but so great an interest did she take in the members of her household, that she encouraged their musical powers, and, unmusical herself, sat smiling contentedly by the side of her much-amused guest, whilst Welsh airs were sung to the accompaniment of the Welsh harp by her faithful dependents. Oh, how they loved and honoured her, those dependents—her gardener, her coachman, and her other faithful servants! Her garden

was her special pride and joy; she tended the flowers, planted them, watered them, and trained them; she kept her splendid shrubs and trees in excellent order; she would sit writing in her little garden-house—a kind of conservatory—so as to be near her beloved rose garden, a wild tangle of loveliness. Then from the window of her drawing-room she would gaze out upon the distance, upon 'a panorama,' as she has said herself, 'of splendid scenery; full of exquisite details, of old stone bridge and ruined abbey, rivers, woods and rocks.' There, in that room overlooking that wonderful view, has Miss Cobbe talked to me of the work of her life, of her early struggles, that were caused by the renunciation of old dogmas; her firm belief in the religion she had hewn out for herself; her hope of woman's emancipation from soul-deadening trivialities, from the snares of fashion, from the slavery of ignorance. She was an ardent believer in woman's suffrage, and it was her conviction that their votes would be recorded on the side of morality and not of expediency. Like her friend and contemporary, Anna Swanwick, she was gifted with an eloquent and forcible power of speech, and felt no hesitation in urging women to make use of that gift,

when they possessed it, in the cause of what she held to be right and noble.

Her lectures to the young, 'On the Duties of Women,' given at Bristol, are admirable; and the few words with which she electrified one of the first meetings, of what is now called the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland, some eleven years ago, induced that same body to send her a congratulatory address upon her eightieth birthday, when the writer of these lines held the presidential chair. Her words of encouragement and advice to those who worked with their pen or by power of speech can never be forgotten by those fortunate enough to receive them.

Gazing one beautiful night in June from an upper window in Miss Cobbe's Welsh home, she pointed out to me a light shining from a rectory casement. 'Beneath that light,' she said, 'lies the churchyard of Llanelltyd, there, where my beloved friend and companion, Mary Lloyd, is buried, there I too shall lie; there in that quiet enclosure will in all probability be the bourne of my long journey of life.'

In the sunshine of the next day we drove to that beautiful spot, and we plucked some roses from the garden of the grave. It is

there that the mortal remains of Frances Power Cobbe are buried. But, like the light that was burning from the window above the churchyard, so, although her presence has departed from amongst us, will the light that she has kindled for many a dark soul remain bright and helpful even to the end.

VERA CARR,

Daughter of the Rev. L. C. Carr (Rector of Overstrand) and Mrs. Carr.*

In these strenuous days of heroism and endurance, our hearts are constantly being wrung by the news that some bright and happy household has been suddenly plunged into mourning — a gallant and beloved soldier son has left England to join the Army, from whence he will never return. And our sympathy goes forth to those who day after day are losing their dear ones on the field of battle or in a hospital ward. Seldom, however, has a little English village been more deeply stirred than the village of Overstrand has been by the news of the terribly sudden death, not of one of its soldier sons, but of a young girl, well known and much beloved in her father's parish and in the surrounding country.

An old friend, who has known Vera Carr from her childhood, now wishes to give in a few slight touches a little picture of that young and joyous life before it ended so tragically.

At the age of twenty-five Vera was a tall and graceful girl, with the free movements

* Reprinted from the *Eastern Daily Press*, Jan. 25th, 1916.

characteristic of those who love an out-of-door existence. She made a friend of Nature, and Nature in return added richly to her joys. She loved the sea passionately and all that belonged to it, she loved it in all its moods. Here I insert a few words from her diary :—

'How we love the waves chasing each other unceasingly around our feet ; what life rushes through our veins as we gallop over the firm sand, leaping the streams made by the incoming tide, and flying over the small black breakwaters, which here and there stretch out to the sea.'

And again :—

'Such a sight met our eyes as we got down the gangway. It was high tide and bright sunshine, the cliffs threw deep blue shadows almost out to the sea, as blue as themselves. We kept quite still and watched two gulls chasing each other, first round our heads, then skimming along almost on the top of the waves. . . .

'I went down to the shore at dawn. It was hardly light ; huge, angry brown waves lashed themselves up to the foot of the cliff in some places, and the cold was intense. . . . Seawards, as far as the eye could reach, were the great, tossing brown waves, capped with foam, while overhead, dark, heavy clouds chased each other across the sky. Suddenly I saw that every cloud was edged with pink, and realised that another day had begun.'

The cliffs, the wild stretches of moorland, the flat, strange marsh country were all beloved by her ; they spoke to her in a familiar tongue. She made friends with shrubs and flowers when they were growing in their own soil, and she understood in a marvellous way the habits of many creatures of the animal world. She had a motley companionship, not only of dogs, but of a tame goose, a homely pig, even of a small family of rats that she occasionally produced from her coat pockets! But of all creatures she loved and perhaps understood best were horses.

This is from her diary :—

'When Michael* and I came in from riding we were both depressed, he, because his off foreshoe was worn through and his legs were caked with mud from galloping over a plough. . . . We stopped by the stable-door for a few minutes, and just as I was going to take Michael in, inspiration came. We would go down to the sea and wash his legs and my brain ! Michael with a little kick of joy, when his feet touched the sand, cantered right into the milky waves that were rushing in all on the top of each other anyhow, as if there was not a second to be lost.'

Vera, from her earliest years, was a fear-

* A favourite horse.

less and capable rider. She had a beautiful seat, and had taught herself to spring unaided into the saddle—no easy performance. She rode well to hounds, when the opportunity came into her way, and had often been complimented upon her clever horsemanship by those who were masters of the art. But her interest in her horse did not end with the ride, she cared for him in the stable, often clipped and groomed him and saw regularly to his feeding. He was her companion and friend.

Of her courage it would be difficult to speak too highly ; she was absolutely fearless. As an example, I may cite the following :—One dark night during this last autumn she was awakened by a noise from the stables near to her window. She instantly rose, went out alone, unfastening the stable door. By the uncertain light of her candle she saw that one of the two chargers billeted there had got loose ; both were kicking in one stall. She climbed up on the manger, and by whipping the horses apart was able to separate them, and tie them up securely, thinking but little of what she had accomplished—or, rather, prevented.

It required some courage to ride a bicycle in the early hours of a dark winter's morn-

ing, or when night-time made travelling by road, if not dangerous, at least unpleasant, yet this is what Vera unflinchingly did, to and from the Red House Military Hospital at Cromer, where for some months her work had taken her. And there her presence was invaluable, for her strong nerve carried her through many a trying time in the operating theatre, where she rapidly gained the approval of surgeon and nurses. Her keen sense of humour made her a favourite with her patients, for she was able to amuse as well as to nurse them. Indeed, this love of fun found expression in many ways; thus, she was indefatigable at inaugurating with her beloved brother, Tony, the many happy entertainments given by the Rectory party to the parishioners, young and old, of Overstrand.

To Vera was due the inception of a company of Scouts in this village. She carefully studied the matter of rules and regulations, she herself being Scout Master. The result was excellent, and many were the delightful hours that the scouts spent in camping out, in cooking over camp fires, in cutting wood, in clearing a path from brambles, or in some healthful ramble through field and wood.

Although open-air pleasures and occupa-

tions appealed most strongly to her, she had a prominent gift for some kinds of home work. Thus, but lately she presented her mother, her adored companion, with a very beautiful specimen of Irish lace, made by her own clever fingers, and was actually taking one of her dainty little pieces of work as a present to a friend, in the shape of a baby's dress, on the very day of her fatal accident. Beyond this, she had a natural taste for drawing and colour; her mother's water-colour drawings, particularly of Norfolk scenery, are well known and appreciated. Few guessed, for Vera was of a singularly modest and reticent nature, that she cared deeply for poetry, and that she had the faculty of expressing herself in verse. I have been permitted to see a wedding gift from her to a dear and intimate friend. It is a beautiful book, the contents compiled by herself; extracts in prose and poetry appear in her own handwriting; each page is finely illuminated. Her own contributions appeal to me so strongly that I am inserting a few quotations :—

'To a Friend on Her Marriage.

'Speed on, fair gulls, on snowy pinions borne,
Over the sparkling sunlit sea,

Watch yonder white-sailed ship, guard her from harm,
And then, sometimes, return to me,
And tell me of the wonders that she finds
Of glowing summer days and cooling winds.'

There is another poem she wrote, called 'The Has-Beens':—

'That which will always be with us,
That which will live for ever,
The memories that can never fade,
The links no man can sever,
Are the wonderful "has-beens" of life,
Whether joyful or peaceful or sad.
There are some that are faded and broken,
And some that are radiantly glad . . .

'But best loved of all are the "Has-beens,"
That autumn alone can unfold,
The crimson leaves of the bramble,
And the sweeping trails of gold.
The blue, blue mists of autumn,
The golden haze on the shore,
The smell of the wet red seaweed,
Will be mine for evermore.

It is impossible to think that such a life, so replete with the joy of existence, so beloved, and so beloving, should be at rest. No, that laughing, soaring spirit, with her passionate love of air and sea, has surely found—not a resting-place—but the sphere where her ideals can be realised, and where

the poetry she could but faintly express on earth may become the pæan of her rejoicing and triumph.

By her mother's wish there was no mournful tolling of the bell, no hearse or mourning carriages; she was carried, on the day of her burial, as she herself would have desired, by eight of the Overstrand fishermen, who had known her since her childhood, one of them remarking, 'She was just like one of us.' They laid her in the chancel of the church, in the midst of beautiful plants and flowers, the warm sunshine pouring in upon her, as if caressing her with its rays. No one amongst that concourse of people who attended that simple yet touching ceremony will ever forget the scene at the grave, when her father himself—the Rector of Overstrand—read the Committal Prayer, laying special emphasis upon the words: 'In sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life'; whilst at the close of the service, as if from Heaven itself came the sweet voices of the choir, from within the church, singing the Easter hymn, 'On the Resurrection morning.' And there all that is mortal of her rests close to the old church wall, sheltered by the hills, and within sound of the sea she loved.

LADY RITCHIE.

AN APPRECIATION.*

ONCE upon a time—it seems a very long time ago now—a little girl with her parents was returning from a visit to Germany, and they were travelling on a Rhine steamer. I do not remember whether the little girl was much attracted by the sight of the castles on the banks of the famous river, but I know that she felt greatly drawn towards a tall, imposing stranger, who, after making friends with the child, ended by lifting her on to his shoulder, pacing up and down the deck with her, and telling her fairy stories that she hoped might prove to be true ones. This almost seems like a fairy story now, but 'the Giant,' as he asked the little girl to call him, appears to her again through the mist of years, and he was none other than William Makepeace Thackeray.

And when, some months after the episode of the Rhine, Mr. Thackeray came to visit the little girl's mother in her London house,

* Reprinted from the *Westminster Gazette*, March 4th, 1919.

he did not come alone, but was holding by each hand a little daughter, of whom the elder was called Annie. My sister and I looked shyly upon our visitors (older than ourselves), but in time the shyness wore off, and I can remember that the young guests* came again and again, and proved to be very amusing and delightful playmates. Many years after this first introduction it was the same little girl's good fortune, then a grown-up young woman about to spend some weeks with her mother and sister touring in Italy, to have as travelling companion (as far as Rome) the little friend of early days—Annie Thackeray. And what a delightful companion she was! Such a genuine lover of fine scenery, one so vividly interested in all works of art, so eager to know and understand the human beings she met, at the same time so unexpected in what she said and did, so untouched by the usual small worries that distress the ordinary traveller, so beautifully regardless of time and of the hours of train departure!

We could not bear relinquishing her upon our arrival in Rome to her welcoming hosts, Mr. Story, the American sculptor, and his wife, who were planning a time of

*Annie (Lady Ritchie) and Minnie (Mrs. Leslie Stephen).

delight for her in their beautiful apartment, high up in the Barberini Palace. The memory of her father was very vivid within those walls, for it was in Rome that Mr. Thackeray, some years before that date, had written his exquisite tale of *The Rose and the Ring*—written, and then read, chapter by chapter, in that same Barberini Palace, to amuse a little child recovering from an illness, Edith by name,* the daughter of his friend Story, the sculptor. It was owing to Annie's kind introduction that the Storys opened their hospitable doors to us, thus giving us a much-appreciated glimpse of the charm of Rome in the sixties. Nearly fifty years later our travelling companion of old, in talking to my sister, recalled with the most astonishing precision every event of that never-to-be-forgotten tour.

Annie, who became the wife of Sir Richmond Ritchie, besides being a devoted wife, and mother of a son and daughter, was indeed a faithful friend ; and perhaps here I may be forgiven for quoting some passages from a charming and somewhat characteristic letter of hers addressed to me only some very few years ago:—

'. . . A friend of mine came to luncheon to-

* Later Marchesa Peruzzi dei Medici.

day, and he began talking of people I have cared for all my life, and I feel so oddly alive in the past as well as in the present, that I can hardly tell sometimes where I am and which is the most real —what I remember, or what I am still living with . . .

'I had a sudden feeling that I wanted to write to you and give you my love, and as old things are now so much the fashion, please take it with a real old Hall Mark, and believe me, ever dear old friend, unchanged.—Your affectionate, ANNIE RITCHIE.'

Lady Ritchie had two divine gifts, those of humour and sympathy; a sense of humour that could never be unkind, and sympathy that did not fail in discernment. Both of these gifts were apparent in her beautiful writings as well as in her fascinating conversation, endowing them with charm and originality. This power of sympathy made her intensely human, but she had as well a fine spiritual side to her nature, indeed, as she once wrote of a poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whom as a child she loved and reverenced :—

'She seemed in her life something of a spirit, and her *view* of life's sorrow and shame, of its beauty and eternal hope, is not unlike that which one might imagine a spirit's to be.'

So I believe that *such a view* transfigured

her own life, during her buoyant and expectant youth and onwards to a serene old age, leaving to us

> 'Memories and precious thoughts
> That shall not die and cannot be destroyed.'

MARY CLIFFORD.

IN MEMORIAM.*

I HAVE sometimes come across human beings who have recalled certain seasons of the year to me. Thus, there are some like voices of the spring, bringing with them visions of fresh and tender verdure, of shy and delicate blossoms; others come like summer glory, with its luxuriance of leaf and its deeply-tinted flowers; whilst others, again, have reminded me of the special charm of autumn, less luxuriant but more suggestive perhaps than summer; and I like to think that this is no fantastic notion of mine.

Mary Clifford, whom I first met in the October of 1892, seems to me now, in looking back through the mist of years, as if she had been the human presentment of a beautiful autumn day: serene, restful, and poetic. The occasion was the first Conference that I had ever attended of the National Union of Women Workers—now, the National Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland. The place was Bristol.

* Reprinted from the *Occasional Paper* of the National Council of Women.

At some evening gathering in connection with our meetings, I was formally introduced to Miss Clifford, the name of her brother Edward, the artist whom I knew and admired, being the passport to that introduction. We were strolling through the gallery of some public building, when she stopped to speak to me. I can remember her quasi-Quaker dress: a gown of brown silk that became her well in its straight, plain folds, a fichu of soft white lawn across her shoulders, a white lace cap on her snow-white hair (white from a very early age); she had the rosy hue of health in her cheeks and a very kindly twinkle in her brown eyes. She seemed akin to a golden-brown leaf, not despising the earth with its joys and wonders, yet ready to be uplifted by a wind from Heaven. She might have sat to her gifted brother as an emblem of autumn, of one of those crisp, warm, lovely autumnal days, when it is a joy to be alive. And from that which was told me in Bristol, I think that there were many in that town whose joy in life had been brought about through Mary Clifford's agency — 'The Guardian Angel,' as she was called by the inmates of the workhouses, which she visited in the capacity of Poor Law Guardian.

From the first moment of our meeting, I felt that we should be friends, and, indeed, I think I may claim Mary Clifford as a friend. Not that we often met, she was too busy a woman to spend much time in social intercourse ; besides, our homes were too far distant from one another to allow of our paths running together. But when we did meet it was as if we had just parted, and I knew how easily we could pick up the threads of the last talk we had had.

Miss Clifford must have been in middle life when I first saw her, but she never seemed to grow really old ; her mind was always ready to take in fresh impressions, to absorb fresh ideas, as her language was open to fresh similes. Practical work, hard work, unusual work for a gentlewoman, as it was considered in those days, had not dulled her love of intellectual pursuits or her delight in the beautiful. She was a born artist : she loved beauty of language as well as beauty of form and beauty of surroundings. In her public speeches I was always struck by the charm of her diction.

I am not going to attempt a detailed account of Mary Clifford and her work—that will be done by another, but a no less sympathetic, pen than mine ; I am simply

trying to give the impressions that some aspects of her personality produced upon me. In order to do this, I will refer to two special occasions when circumstances brought us somewhat closely together. The first one was in the year 1903, when I had the honour of being President of the National Union, our Conference taking place at Cheltenham and Gloucester. I was retiring President of that year, and Miss Clifford had been elected to succeed me. I had been meeting her constantly during that week, and had noticed that she was always present when I was speaking, and I could feel instinctively, all the time, that she was listening; carefully, critically, and yet kindly. When she rose to give the valedictory address, at the close of the Conference, her election having been previously announced —which information had been received with a perfect storm of applause—I was struck by her very attractive modesty. She said: 'Thank you for giving me such a welcome. I am not yet President, but I look forward very gladly to being the *servant* of such a Union as this.' And she meant it.

Then she drew upon her artistic knowledge for similes and examples. She made a great point of quality as opposed to

quantity in work, and this agreed with the estimate that I had formed of her character. The quality *there*, was so fine, so delicate, there was neither hurry nor conventionality in what she did or said. Her reference in her speech to John Bunyan's writings seemed to suit her old-fashioned dress, whilst the prayer of George Macdonald's that she quoted—'Lord, make us out-and-out hearty to one another'—agreed well with her bright and cheery nature. In what a kindly way she touched upon my Presidential address (before the delivery of which I had inwardly quailed), calling it 'charming, suggestive, and humorous,' all epithets that might have been applied to her own words, and how she urged that we should 'learn to trust one another, really to know one another, and to listen patiently; to possess, in fact, that delightful, but somewhat rare, quality of being a good listener,' which quality she so eminently possessed. I remember thinking at the time how little there was of 'self' in the discourse, and that although her work might be taking her into the light of publicity, she always carried with her that unmistakable fragrance and delicacy so inseparable from a beautiful home life. She said towards the close of her address, 'And what is the out-

come of it all? Winning the world to goodness and to God.'

And that was her aim in life, and who can say that she did not carry out her part faithfully and whole-heartedly.

The second occasion upon which I would touch was in 1904, in connection with the International Union of Women Workers, who were holding their Conference in that year in Berlin, under the Presidency of Lady Aberdeen. Miss Clifford, President of our National Union, attended these meetings in company with Mrs. Alfred Booth, also a valued friend of mine and an ex-President. It was a stimulating occasion, full of novelty and of interest. It was my first visit to Berlin, and I was delighted with the spontaneous and hearty welcome that we received. It was in Berlin that Mary Clifford, as usual, won golden opinions. I remember saying, on my return, in an address I gave at Gloucester:

'It may gratify you to know that our President, Miss Clifford, with her beautiful bearing, her simple dress, and her distinctly spiritual tone of mind acted like a charm upon all who met her, and, in the first German paper that I opened in the train, when nearing Berlin, I read to my delight, but not to my surprise, that Miss Clifford had won all hearts.'

I think that one great secret of her success was her simplicity of manner, her absence from all affectation, her genuine sense of humour ; she was so completely herself, and so unlike any one else. I remember that during that Congress she spoke on her own special subjects : 'Women in the Civil Law' and 'The Unmarried Mother and her Child.' She also took part in several debates. She was always deeply interested in the position of women throughout the world.

In commenting upon her Berlin experiences, she said, speaking at York, in the autumn of the same year :—

'The German welcome was wonderful—such a welcome, so genuine, surely tends to promote International respect and good understanding.'

Alas! those words have at this moment a cruel and derisive ring, but let us hope that they contain a note of prophecy which may one day be fulfilled !

I feel that the abiding strength of Miss Clifford's active work lay in the fact that, whilst never neglecting its practical side, her firm belief in the guiding power of God was to the last unshaken.

Quoting again from her address at the York Conference in 1904, she said :—

'We happen to live in the most crowded age

the world has yet seen. Needs, sorrows, and plans to relieve them claim, without ceasing, our attention. We know too well how we are apt to hurry from one subject to another, from this Committee to that, trying to put things right. The temptation is almost irresistible to get rid of the difficulties and pain at any cost, to avoid the suffering by a short cut without overmuch inquiry, to be lax in method for the sake of a quick result. But in our hurry perhaps we may not have penetrated to the real solution. It is there with the light from above shining upon it. "Only when we know the Divine mind do we truly know our own." But the path of discovery is nearly always one of patience, and of discipline, and of a resolute will that does not refuse pain.'

I cannot close this slight attempt in presenting some aspects of Miss Clifford's personality without touching upon her genius for friendship. She was a faithful and discerning friend. I am allowed to include a few lines sent me by Miss Blanche Pigott—a dearly-loved friend of hers and of mine, and one of many years' standing. The two friends had much in common, their deep sense of religion, their artistic taste and skill, their love of beautiful surroundings, their enjoyment in Nature, their unselfish devotion to the work of their lives:—

'Mary Clifford was not rich [writes Miss

Pigott] as men count riches, and yet she gave more than others would dream of. She could do it because she quite forgot herself. What thousands of miles she must have walked through the long years of her work at Bristol, up the steep hills, through rain and sleet or enervating heat, often footsore and weary, to save expense in order that she might have more to give others. She would send flowers to cheer some sick friend, new books to refresh others in their weariness, or a picture to make their rooms more beautiful. She considered no trouble too great to take for her friends, no detail conducing to their comfort or their good too small for her to spend herself upon. Her wonderful letters were like herself, full of beauty, humour, tenderness, vigour, and fun. She wore herself out in service, not only for great causes, but for her friends, always giving of her very best, and leaving a radiance wherever she passed, a glow of gladness and invigorating joy. But underneath that calm and gentle surface was a most sensitive spirit, deeply wounded by the pains of the world, and shrinking from the cruelties and coarseness of life. She had so caught her Master's likeness that :

'"Saving others, herself she could not save."'

A sad illness clouded Miss Clifford's last years, when prostrate as she lay, through sadness and suffering, even the love of her friends could do but little to help her. But in spite of her failing strength, there was an

occasional rift in the clouds, when she would give expression to her unwavering faith and when her heart and spirit responded to some event of far-reaching importance. Thus, in the December of 1917, I received the following letter in her own handwriting :—

'DEAREST LADY BATTERSEA,—

'I cannot help writing you a line of *rejoicing* at the good news which has just reached us here to-day about Jerusalem. One can hardly believe it. Putting all other things aside, isn't it splendid to think that at last the worst sorrows and trials of your Nation are over and that to us has been given the honour of redressing these wrongs! To us it means a great deal more on all sides, it is a noble vindication of God.

'I heard of you through Blanche; thank you for the kind affectionate message. I so often think of you.

'Yours every affectionately,

'MARY CLIFFORD.'

MRS. HUMPHRY WARD.

A REMINISCENCE.*

When I was a very young girl, aflame with enthusiasm for writers of prose and of poetry, I had the privilege of becoming acquainted with Matthew Arnold, and this in a very pleasant way. That charming author was, at that time, Inspector of Elementary Schools, and he it was who annually visited our girls' school in the village of Aston Clinton, in Buckinghamshire, a school that owed its existence to my parents. Mr. Arnold, already well known to my mother, owing to his annual inspection of the Jews' Free School, was not slow in adding my sister and myself to his list of youthful friends and admirers. After his work was over for the day, he would share with us the enjoyment of a rapid country walk, a search in the hedgerows for wild violets or an exciting game of croquet. We deeply deplored the day when his duties as an inspector (in our county) came to an end, but were consoled

* Reprinted from the *Bucks Herald and Aylesbury Advertiser*, March, 1920.

by the friendly visits that he continued to pay us in our beloved country home.

There, on a certain occasion, many years later he excused himself to my mother for being late for dinner on the plea that he had been deeply engrossed by a book that he had been reading, written by one of his nieces, which struck him as being very remarkable. 'It was hardly a novel,' he said, but a most extraordinary piece of literary work, in some passages even moving him to tears. 'But it will not be popular,' he added, 'too abstruse for the general reader. I do not think that my niece will ever be a *popular* novelist.' The book was—*Robert Elsmere;* the author —*Mrs. Humphry Ward.*

Matthew Arnold was wrong in his prediction. The book made the author's fame, and that instantly. From that time onwards her works of fiction had an immense circulation.

It was not long after that date, in the late eighties, that we had the pleasure of making Mrs. Humphry Ward's acquaintance, whilst, later on, circumstances were helpful to the closer tie of friendship between us. A charming country seat, 'Stocks' by name, only a few miles distant from Aston Clinton, in the pretty village of Aldbury,

Hertfordshire, being for sale, was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Humphry Ward, who were both much attracted by its beauty of position, and the possibilities it possessed of future improvements. They came with their young family, prepared to be on pleasant terms with their neighbours, rich and poor. These were at first somewhat alarmed by the fact that Mrs. Ward was the author of a most unorthodox work, indeed some of the villagers expressing the hope that 'the lady might not prove to be quite an atheist.' Even the educated public felt some curiosity as to the religious views of the now much spoken of writer, and as to the influence she might exercise upon her surroundings.

But Mrs. Ward's pen—a very active one—learned and trenchant as it was, proved to be no barrier between her and those amongst whom she lived, her very unorthodoxy was tacitly accepted and forgiven. Perhaps this may have been owing to the unfailing and lively interest that she and her family took, from the very beginning, in the lives of those who lived in that pretty Hertfordshire village. At all events, prejudices vanished, clergy and neighbours on all sides felt and succumbed to the attraction of one who

possessed not only a spirit of reverence for all that she held to be great and good, but also an immense sense of the duty of right action as well as that of right thought.

Mrs. Humphry Ward did not merely sit down and evolve novels of great purpose and stirring matter, out of her clever brain. She came personally into contact with all manner and kinds of human beings. Moreover, she was possessed by a passionate desire to bring greater happiness and more sunshine into the lives of those, both in cities and country villages, who were suffering from a grey and cold existence, for whom she was always ready with pen and voice to work untiringly and unceasingly. She shrank before no difficulties. With the same pluck that allowed her uncomplainingly to traverse by motor, hundreds of miles of devastated country, during the cold late winter months of 1916, 1917, and again in 1919, in order to get first-hand knowledge of the battlefields in France, which enabled her to write her now famous books, *England's Effort*, *Towards the Goal*, and *Fields of Victory*, she inaugurated schemes that she had devised for the healthful recreation of the young, such as the celebrated Play Centres and other social

work, in all of which she proved to be eminently successful. Although, perhaps, not gifted with a keen sense of humour, she possessed an immense appreciation of real enjoyment, and serious as she was in her outlook on life, she did not neglect the joyous side that it ought to present to the young for whom she felt so ardently. Mrs. Humphry Ward had a number of Jewish friends, amongst whom I may mention Mr. Claude Montefiore, for whose biblical research and writings she showed great admiration ; indeed, she was much in sympathy with the Jewish race, although the religion that she had evolved for herself—the result of profound study—was less in touch with those in whom racial affinities existed than with others who claimed kinship with her in spiritual aspirations.

'Stocks' is a charming country seat ; the view from the garden essentially English. It has all the elements of natural beauty that we connect with home life. It is peaceful, yet not dull or lonely. There are great beech-trees, an avenue of limes, hills crowned with woods, pasture land in the near distance, and the presence of cottage life close by.

When I last saw Mr. and Mrs. Humphry

Ward, they were seated in their fragrant shady garden, amongst beautiful rose-trees, and sweet-smelling verbena, the afternoon sun illuminating the lawn and fields beyond; a delightful scene, and a noble setting to the interesting talk that I enjoyed with both husband and wife. I remember thinking as I left them how wonderfully well-balanced in heart and in mind was the distinguished writer, and also how evident it was, that besides the love she bore to her fellow-creatures, and besides the powerful stimulus of her intellect, there existed in her the conviction that no character could be perfect without its crowning point: that of spiritual aspiration—Communion with the Divine—which in her case found one of its expressions in the devoted service she gave to man.

ADELINE, DUCHESS OF BEDFORD.*

Some twenty-five years ago the writer of these lines was asked whether she would undertake a work, newly inaugurated, that of visiting the Female Convict Prison, which had been moved from Woking to Aylesbury. She acquiesced all the more readily on being told that she would have as her colleague Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, a friend of long standing. The newly-appointed visitors were also asked to serve upon the Prison Board, the seven or eight members of which, under the chairmanship of Sir Algernon West, had until then been men.

It would be difficult to describe, and impossible to forget, the impression made upon workers, prison officials, and convicts, by the presence of one of these visitors, who not only brought a singular grace and charm into those formidable precincts, but also impressed every one concerned by her quiet decision of manner, her great spirit of justice, and her regard for the opinion of those who had had more experience in the work than

* Reprinted from the *Westminster Gazette*, April 16th, 1920.

she could claim. Not that the Duchess was by any means a novice in work connected with women of unhappy character and unfortunate circumstances; she had already shown a true spirit of love and charity in searching them out and in taking them under her care, and she was well fitted to occupy the prominent place she soon took and held for many years on the Board of Visitors. Patiently indeed did she listen to the long tales that some of the poor women at Aylesbury poured into her ear, carefully testing the truth of their words by the close inspection of the printed records or by long and intimate converse with those in authority.

Heedless of fatigue, she would travel down from London, or motor over from her home in Chenies, during the cold wintry weather or in the summer heat—often twice in the month—for the faithful performance of her duties. She kept a complete and accurate record of the women with whom she specially dealt, and of whom she endeavoured not to lose sight after their release.

Deeply religious as she was, and believing in the power of the beautiful over those whose souls are sick and sorry, she aspired to and succeeded in bringing some colour and charm into the singularly unattractive prison

chapel. And, indeed, she may have felt rewarded, for when a few years later that chapel was destroyed by fire, a number of most pathetic letters, written spontaneously by the poor women, were received by the Duchess, imploring her to use all her endeavours in restoring the said chapel and making it even more beautiful than before. Her eyes filled with tears in relating this to her interested listeners, and her voice was full of emotion when she was able to say that the new House of Prayer fully responded to the desires of those who frequented it.

At one period of her prison experiences it came to her that the women were spending some hours of each day in solitary confinement after having completed the task allotted to them, at which, not unnaturally, their rebellious spirits fretted, and from which their conduct suffered. She therefore initiated what was called 'recreative work,' which proved to be a great success. Clever brains, deft fingers, inventive talent came to the fore; the work-basket, well provided with material, was hailed with delight, whilst the warders were not slow in taking an interest in the many fancy articles that were produced in prison cells, and that seemed to have some magic spell in evoking

a spirit of good-humour, and even of hopefulness, in the workers. It brought them into greater touch with the outside world.

Many schemes of helpfulness and of reform emanated from the Duchess. But kind and generous as she was, there was no sentimentality in her intercourse with the women ; she did care for them with all her loving heart and ardent soul, but she did not give them false hopes, or make them believe that they could recover from a sad and often terrible past without true penitence and the determination of trying to lead a very different although possibly a much more difficult life.

The lady visitors to prisons throughout England, numbering nearly two hundred, were annually convened by the Duchess, their President, until the Great War put an end to such gatherings.

How well I recall the last occasion on which I was present : the official character of the room in the Home Office, where a number of us were seated, the entry of the Secretary of State for the Home Department; of the Chaplain-General of Prisons, and other dignitaries; of our President—stately, beautiful ; her voice, somewhat tremulous at first, becoming stronger and more impressive as

she warmed to her subject. Her words were most apt, very touching, at times pathetic; the note of her address distinctly inspiring, bidding us work on, hope on, in spite of disappointments and of the fact that we might not often be permitted to see a happy result of our labours.

Is it a vain hope—I do not believe it is—that this loving, gracious soul should already be conscious, in some way, but dimly conjectured by us, that her work on earth has been granted its reward, in the knowledge that many of those for whom she has striven have truly responded by their changed lives?

> 'And doubtless unto thee is given
> A life that bears immortal fruit
> In such great offices as suit
> The full-grown energies of Heaven.'

PAPERS AND ADDRESSES

THE 'SEDER' EVENING.*

IF any of my readers have ever had the occasion to see a portfolio of photographs taken from the original paintings of Professor Oppenheim called 'Pictures from Old Jewish Life,' they will have been initiated into some of the scenes connected with the Jewish religious festivals. Those festivals were generally of a domestic and social as well as of a religious character. The Jews carried their religion into their everyday life, and there was hardly an action, however trivial it might seem, that was not hallowed by some special prayer being dedicated to it. The Jews, for so many years drawn apart from all other nations, lived a very complete life amongst themselves, and they took keen delight in what has been erroneously termed a bondage to the Law, but which, in their case, was a close and beautiful tie between themselves and the one God whom they worshipped, and who was connected with every phase and circumstance of their existence.

* Reprinted from the *Sunday Magazine*, April, 1897.

From birth to death, and even after death, this tie existed, making sordid, poor, hunted, persecuted lives gracious and beautiful. The old, but ever-fascinating story told by Heine of the poor Jew, who every Friday at sunset prepared to receive a Princess* at his domestic hearth, and who for twenty-four hours felt himself to be a rival to any monarch on his throne, is the keynote to his history and to the scenes that Oppenheim's brush has ably represented.

If suspicion, distrust, ignominy were the Jew's portion in the outer world, within the four walls of his home was a kingdom that sprang from spiritual as well as material foundations.

The very *raison d'être* of this kingdom was a spiritual one. It resembled, in many ways, some of the houses of the richer Jews in the Middle Ages, which were of a dark, grey, unostentatious appearance from without, whilst within the aspect was brilliant, glowing, and often luxurious. The Jews love colour and beauty. They are of a sensuous race. If circumstances caused their outer lives to be grey and ugly, their social proclivities and their joyous natures set a mark upon their domestic inner lives,

* The Sabbath.

making their religious festivals always bright and cheerful. Even at the close of the Day of Atonement, a day of twenty-five hours spent in fasting and prayer, the Jew would hurry home from the synagogue to a festive board, where the stranger was welcomed and bidden to make merry.

The Sabbath was not spent as some persons of puritanical leaning would wish us to believe, in grim meditation or enforced idleness, but although work was forbidden on that day, the repose was to be cheerful, and social amenities were always encouraged. Naturally, in the years of persecution—the Ghetto years of the Jewish people — from which in most civilised countries they are now happily released, the contrast between their outer and inner lives was most strongly exhibited, and it would seem as if their serenity of spirit and love of bright human intercourse found their best expression both in the home and the synagogue—the latter serving not only the objects of a place of worship as understood amongst a Christian community, but also many purposes of innocent, social intercourse. Now that so much has completely changed in their outer lives, and that Jewish men and women are gladly welcomed to all social gatherings

(whether of a public or private nature), the synagogue is changing also, and is literally the house of prayer and worship, and not the meeting-place or centre, as it used to be, for the judicial, educational, and even social life of the people.

Thus the festivals must also lose some of their old characteristics, and must perforce part with some of the rich Oriental colour that was so eminently theirs in the past. It is well to recall the special features of old Jewish life : once so eloquently and whimsically described by Heine in prose and verse ; so pathetically and brilliantly drawn in the present day by Mr. Zangwill ; and given to us again in such scholarly garb by Mr. Israel Abrahams in his *Jewish Life of the Middle Ages.*

The Jews had been ignored, disdained, laughed at for centuries ; the race had become a Cinderella amongst races, when suddenly the fairy godmother appeared and produced in lieu of a fairy coach and wonderful horses, men whose pens and brush were at the service of this poor drudge, whom they were prepared to carry forth into the great world, decked out in attractive garb, but yet her own self.

Born in the last year of the last century,

Oppenheim at an early age discovered the true bent of his genius, and devoted himself to the portrayal of the quaint but touching scenes taken from real life and from a life he knew so well. He produced a small gallery of pictures that has been valuable in showing how intimate was the connection between the religious observances and the incidents of domestic life amongst the Jews, and how their social life was sanctified on every occasion by these observances. The Rabbis did not shun society ; the men of the world were at home in their synagogue. The term, 'the religious world,' would have been a misnomer : they could all be religious, that is to say, religious in their sense of the word, and social at the same time. This fact appears nowhere more strikingly than in the Hebrew festivals. Let us see what Oppenheim makes of the feast of Passover, a seven days' festival, or rather of its opening scene.

It is the Jewish Easter eve : the 'Seder'* evening as it is called, when the family are all assembled round the festive table.

But Oppenheim cannot show us what has taken place before that gathering. The housewife, careful, punctilious to the ex-

* 'Seder,' meaning arrangement, order—*i.e.*, order of service and ceremony.

treme, would not only have seen that every particle of leaven had been turned out of the kitchen, that the store-rooms and the house generally were tidied, but would have thoroughly cleansed her entire establishment from attic to basement. Purity and cleanliness were marked characteristics of the believing and orthodox Jew, who, in following strictly the law of Moses, anticipated many of the sanitary laws of to-day.

The members of the household meet in Sabbath attire at sunset (Jewish women have always been distinguished for their love of attractive dress and ornament), and both men and women have made a custom of wearing special garments for prayer, attendance at synagogue, and even for study. Knowledge was no mean handmaiden to be wooed in everyday garb. The Sabbath lamp with its seven burners has been lighted by the housewife—one of her prerogatives—the dinner service (dishes and plates expressly retained for this festival and used at no other time) is in readiness ; the food having been cooked in vessels dedicated to this one holyday's repasts. This is a custom rigidly maintained in all orthodox Jewish households, involving a complete separate set of cooking utensils and china services. The

table is now prepared for the semi-religious and social meal. The cloth, as we remark in Oppenheim's picture, has an embroidered border ; in wealthy households the embroideries are of rich design and texture ; gold and silver drinking cups—the best that the family possess or can borrow—are brought out for the sanctification of the wine, 'kiddush.' On the table are placed the Passover cakes—the *matzos ;* the shank bone of a lamb and an egg, both roasted with fire; a dish of bitter herbs, consisting of some lettuce, parsley, or horse-radish ; a cup of vinegar, or salt and water ; and a plate of *charoseth*, a compound of almonds, apples, and other fruit.

Each of these dishes has of course its significance. The *matzos* or unleavened cakes are a reminder of the hurried departure of the Israelites from Egypt, when they had to start in all haste on that memorable journey; there was then no time to let the bread undergo the usual process of leavening, and they had to carry their unleavened cakes with them. The lamb bone is a memorial of the paschal lamb that was killed and eaten by each family on the eve of their departure from Egypt; the egg typified the special festival sacrifice offered during the existence

of the Temple; the bitter herbs and cup of vinegar recall the bitter days of Egyptian slavery; the *charoseth*, particularly dear to the Jewish children, bears some faint resemblance to the lime and mortar used by the Israelites for their labours in Egypt.

The father, mother, and children have taken their places round the table: the head of the family sits on a cushioned seat and leans partly to one side.

This denotes that he is at his ease, a free man; not eating in trembling haste, with loins girt, staff in hand, and sandalled feet, like his ancestors of old when preparing for their flight.

In some towns of Germany and Poland the father and mother were called on that night, *melech* and *malca*, king and queen, but the queen instead of a crown wore a closely-fitting cap, jealously concealing her hair; for a Jew in old days was not allowed to pray in the presence of a woman with uncovered hair, besides which modest women, when married, used always to cover their locks. In those old days likewise (I am talking of a century ago), the husband or king would be clothed in white; over his Sabbath attire he would be wearing his shroud, for he must not be puffed up with pride or conceit, in

spite of this being the night of all others that makes the heart of a Jew beat with triumph—for is he not celebrating the hour of his release from slavery?

'Amongst the Jews,' so Mr. Israel Abrahams tells us, in that delightful book of his, which we would recommend to all those who are interested in the customs and ceremonies of this ancient race, 'there was always a desire to keep even men's joys tempered by more serious thoughts.'

Each member of the Jewish faith living under the same roof is bidden to the feast. In Oppenheim's picture, the servant is portrayed standing in the doorway; and the children are taught to show special courtesy to those dependent upon them, during the festival of Passover: also the stranger, maybe some learned Jew from a neighbouring town, well versed in Talmudic lore, has been welcomed to the family party. 'To the stranger within their gates' the Jew would always extend the cordial hand of greeting, at no time more cordial than at this season of rejoicing.

The heads of the men are covered, a sure sign that they are about to take part in a religious ceremony. The father begins by lifting the glass of wine to his lips and

pronouncing the first blessing—there are four blessings in all—typifying the fourfold expressions of deliverance from Egypt.* Each person seated at the table has a drinking cup, which must be filled and emptied four times; but as a proof of the temperate habit of the Jews, we would beg our readers to mark that each cup is only supposed to contain the fifth part of a pint, so that the entire amount of wine consumed does not exceed one pint for each person. Moreover the wine itself is seldom strong; in fact, the greater quantity of that which is used in the present day is unfermented, manufactured by the housewife herself from soaked raisins or from the juice of fresh grapes: never has the festival with all its glee and joyousness been degraded by anything like drunkenness and riot, whether among the rich or the poor. Fortunately, the Jewish people never have found, and we hope never will find, any difficulty in uniting mirth with sobriety.

There is yet another cup, placed in the centre of the table, dedicated to the use of an unseen guest of the evening—the great prophet Elijah; it is at first only partly filled, but as the cups of the celebrants receive their contents, some portion of the

* Exodus, vi. 6–7.

wine is poured each time into the prophet's cup.

The parsley is now dipped in vinegar or salt and water—then divided amongst the household; the unleavened cakes are broken; the bone and egg are held aloft; the children are encouraged to ask questions concerning the ritual; riddles or quaint sayings are introduced into the service; songs and hymns are sung to enliven and diversify the proceedings. The prayers are chanted from beginning to end by the father of the household; the other members following in an undertone, whilst the whole party joins in the stirring and joyous hymns. The central thought expressed in these hymns and in many of the prayers is the fervent desire for the speedy rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, the burden sounding over and over again:

> 'O build, O build, O build, O Lord,
> Thy Temple very soon.'

There are many quaint adaptations and fables in the Seder service, such as the story of the little kid, which, with its perpetual repetitions, reminds us of the familiar 'House that Jack Built' of our childhood. Then there is the episode of the four sons, intended

as a dramatic representation of the various possible members of a household. There are the wise son, the wicked son, the simple son, and the very young child whose intelligence has not yet been awakened. The wise son asks, 'What mean the testimonies which the Lord our God has commanded?' The wicked one: 'What is this service unto *you?*' implying that it does not concern him; the simple one: 'Why is this?' to all of which there are appropriate answers. But the youngest or foolish son is incapable of asking a question, and so the father is represented as spontaneously relating to him the meaning of the Festival.

There is another strange custom on Seder night, which has more than one significance. The door of the room is opened at a stated time, and the words of the prayer sound as follows: 'In this year we are still slaves, next year we shall be free men,' and able to go through the open door being understood. The action is likewise intended as an invitation to those who are poor and hungry to approach the festive table;* it

* It has often been, and still is the custom for members of the Jewish faith, to invite one or more poor or homeless persons to dinner on this and other festival occasions.

also coincides with the idea of that invisible Presence, whose coming we have already alluded to.

The evening meal is served after a short grace has been said; an excellent and tasty meal, but in strict accordance with Talmudic precept. At the close of the repast a longer grace is chanted, and the third cup of wine is filled and drunk; the rest of the service consisting of psalms and hymns, after which the glasses are filled and emptied for the fourth time.

These social, yet religious celebrations are habitual to most Jewish households, and are not confined to any one country: they are national, and may be looked upon as a very curious and precious heirloom of ancient times. Perhaps this festival, more than any other, has brought and still brings, the scattered members of a household together; travellers hasten their return in order to celebrate the Seder with their relatives; married sons and daughters with their children are wont to assemble in the old home; several generations of one family congregate round the festive board, when also the stranger without kith or kin may secure a kindly welcome. Misunderstandings have often been cleared up; reconciliations have

been effected before the Seder night came to an end, and those annual reunions have certainly strengthened the family tie, which in Jewish life plays so important a part.

Year after year, on the eve of the great festival, has the story of the redemption from slavery been read in the old Hebrew tongue—year after year have the children asked, 'Why is this night to be distinguished from all other nights?' 'Why do we to-night partake of the bitter herbs and eat the unleavened bread and sit at our ease?'

Year after year have the childlike and quaint hymns rung forth in somewhat strange melody from stately palatial homes, as from lowly and humble tenements; they are chanted in the Old World and in the New; they have been borne across the deep waters from the cabin of an ocean steamer, and they have soared above the bugle call from the soldier's tent. More than this, in the heart of many a devout and believing partaker of the paschal meal, there still lingers the hope that on one of these anniversaries of the nation's first redemption from slavery, the final redemption of Israel may be permitted to take place.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.*

We must imagine that six months have passed since I gave my readers a glimpse of the members of a Jewish household, celebrating the 'Seder' festival; and I am once again about to introduce them into these pages.

They are again preparing for a semi-social, semi-religious festival, but instead of making their best parlour or dining-room ready for the occasion, they are putting the finishing touches to the adornment of what looks like a very ornate summer-house, which is called a 'succah,' and the festival that is about to be celebrated is the Feast of Tabernacles.

What is a 'succah'? And what is the Feast of Tabernacles?

In Palestine, where the Feast of Tabernacles had been observed by the Jews from biblical days, it coincided with the completion of the ingathering of the harvest. It marked the end of the autumn, when the rainy season, which corresponds with our winter is about to commence; in fact, it

* Reprinted from the *Sunday Magazine*, June, 1897.

was the Harvest Thanksgiving of the Hebrews; the harvest of the vine and the olive; the harvest of such fruit as was particularly grateful to dwellers in hot countries, so that we may in a measure compare it to the Harvest Thanksgiving festival so common to all Western countries.

Like most of the Jewish festivals, however, it had a twofold meaning. Besides its agricultural character, it was also intended to keep alive the memory of the tent-like existence which the Israelites led in the desert during their wanderings after the exodus from Egypt, and of the divine protection vouchsafed to them. In order to bring that remembrance very vividly before them, the descendants of the wanderers were commanded by a very ancient law to build themselves booths—which are called *succoth* in Hebrew, in Latin, *tabernacula*—in which they were to live during the eight days of the festival.* In addition to this we are told in the old Bible words that 'They were to take the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook, and they were to rejoice before the Lord.'

In modern days the Tabernacle has

* Lev. xxiii. 39–43.

become more complicated in structure and adornment, but still in all essentials the old and the new 'succah' are one and the same.

In Bible times every male Israelite was commanded to worship in the common Temple of Jerusalem at the three great agricultural festivals of the year. Three times in the course of the year—first in the springtime, on the feast of Passover ; then on the feast of Pentecost, which falls in the fresh and early summer, when the first harvest is ripe ; and again in the autumn on the Feast of Tabernacles, when the in-gathering of the fruit has taken place, long caravans of Israelites driving their flocks and herds before them, might have been seen travelling from all parts of Palestine to Jerusalem.

These festivals resemble in some ways the fairs that were held in the Middle Ages, and that formed the great meeting-place for men who lived dispersed over a wide continent. Only, like all festivals celebrated by the Hebrews, and in the latter days by the Jews, the religious element sanctified and inspired the social character of the observance. It was in very truth a rejoicing before the Lord, when the poor and needy were to be remembered, for no festival was complete

that did not include the charitable as well as the spiritual element.*

During the Feast of Tabernacles the city of Jerusalem was changed into a city of green booths, many of which were built upon the flat roofs of the houses.

After the destruction of the first Temple and during the captivity of the people, it was natural that the celebration of these festivals should cease, there being no place of worship in Babylon sanctified to the Jews for their religious observances; but these were revived when the second Temple was built.

The account in the Book of Nehemiah dealing with a very special celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles is so picturesque and vivid that perhaps I may be forgiven if I linger over it for a few moments.

It was in the year 516 B.C. that the second Temple was completed, and it was during the middle of the next century that upon Ezra the Scribe and Nehemiah the Governor, the two most important men of the time, devolved the re-organizing of the whole religious ceremony.

* Deut. xvi. 17: 'Every man shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He has given thee.'

It was on the first day of the seventh month, Tishri, corresponding to our September or October, at the beginning of the civil year (about 444 B.C.), that the vast concourse of people arrived from all parts of Judea, and assembled before one of the gates of the newly-built city of Jerusalem, demanding that the book of the law of Moses, almost forgotten by them, should be read. To Ezra this request was especially addressed. Standing upon the high wooden platform erected for the purpose, he unfurled the sacred scroll and solemnly blessed the Lord; whereupon all the people answered with a loud voice, 'Amen and Amen,' prostrating themselves to the ground and worshipping. Then Ezra read to that eager multitude from morning hour until midday from the words of the scroll, whilst able assistants learned in the law—priests and Levites—gave all necessary explanations of the text.

The people, comparing the divine commands with what struck them now as their own sinful lives, burst forth into loud and tearful lamentations. But Ezra and Nehemiah bade them neither mourn nor weep, but said: 'Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to those

who have nothing prepared for them.' Moreover, Ezra commanded them to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and to set about making their booths. They were to gather branches of the olive tree, the myrtle, the palm, and the thick-leaved trees, as it was written. The branches were duly gathered, and the work must have been a delight to the Israelites, so recently returned to the homes of their fathers. The frail booths, redolent of the sweet freshness of hill and valley, rose all over Jerusalem ; on the roofs and in the yards of the houses, in the vast courts of the Temple, and before the gates of the city, the whole people kept the festival with rejoicings, while on each of the seven days portions of the law were publicly read.

The worshippers little thought that the second Temple would share the fate of the first one, and in its turn succumb to the strong arm of the invader.

But as Heine has once so whimsically, yet pathetically, remarked : 'The Jews, who are great authorities upon what is precious, knew perfectly well what they were about when, at the second burning of the Temple, they abandoned the sacrificial vessels, the candlesticks and lamps, even the high priest's breastplate with its costly jewels,

and only saved the *Bible.* That was the real treasure, and, thank God, that did not fall a prey to the flames.' And so it has come about that the old customs have lived through the course of centuries, and that the festival of the 'Succah' is observed in Western as in Eastern countries. Originally, these booths were small huts, such as were used for camping out on the hills during the vintage season in Palestine when the husbandmen were engaged in gathering the grapes.

When a householder is the fortunate possessor of a garden, the booth is not only easy of erection, but the materials for building it are at hand. Failing the garden, there may be a backyard, a small open space, or even the leads above the kitchen or basement. Within the synagogue it is the almost invariable custom to erect a booth, and pious Jews who possess none of their own send contributions of fruit and flowers, to ornament the tabernacles of their more fortunate friends and neighbours.

'The chief difference between the booth and ordinary house consists of the mode or material employed in roofing the two structures. For the "succah" must not be covered with fixed boards, or beams, or with canvas, but with detached

branches of trees, plants, flowers, and leaves, in such a manner that the covering is not quite impenetrable to wind or rain or starlight. During the festival the "succah" is the dwelling-house where the members of the household take their meals, study, receive friends, and if possible enjoy rest and sleep. If, on account of the severity of the climate, the constant dwelling in the "succah" should prove injurious to health, meals alone are taken in the tabernacle.'*

The interior of the 'succah' is as brilliantly decorated as a Christmas-tree. Fruits of all sorts, more especially grapes and melons, are suspended from the walls; flowers are carefully arranged amongst the branches; lights are placed at convenient distances to brighten the scene, and the table is spread with tempting fruit, cakes, and wine. Friends in numbers drop in during the day to view the wonderful erection, to partake of the dainties and to wish one another 'The compliments of the season'—*i.e.*, 'a happy festival.'

Children are the favourite guests on this occasion and to them the 'succah' becomes almost like the palace in a fairy tale, growing up in the night to vanish again after a week's existence. Last, not least, do they enjoy

* M. Friedlander: *The Jewish Religion.*

the nuts which are eaten on the seventh day of Tabernacles. In old days at the close of the Feast of Tabernacles the boys were allowed to make bonfires of the boughs and leaves with which the booths were roofed, and then to roast apples in the flames.*

The writer of these lines remembers as an era in her life, one memorable occasion, when as a child she was allowed to eat her evening meal with some members of her family, in a 'succah' at Frankfort. The novelty of the proceedings, beginning with a Prayer of Sanctification chanted in Hebrew, the peculiar meal, richer and more varied than anything she had been accustomed to, the glimpses of the starlit sky through the braided branches of the trees, which gave a delightful picnic impression to the scene, and the prayers, half sung and half read at the conclusion of the feast, all remain most indelibly imprinted upon her memory.

Types of the produce of the fields and of the gardens are gathered into the 'succah.' Amongst them are notably four kinds of plants, viz., the citron, the branch of the palm tree, three myrtle branches, and two branches of the willow. Dr. Friedlander tells

* I. Abrahams: *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages.* (Macmillan.)

us that according to an interpretation from the Midrash, they represent four different types of plants: (1) that which has a pleasant fragrance and a beautiful form; (2) that which is beautiful in form, but without fragrance; (3) that which smells pleasantly, but is inferior in form; (4) that which has neither a goodly form, nor an agreeable fragrance; as if to say, that we are thankful to God for all that He has given us, although to our minds some of these seem imperfect in comparison with others. Not only are these plants used in the adornment of the 'succah' but they are taken into the synagogue during the seven days' festival, held in the hands of the worshippers during the recitation of the Psalms of Praise, and carried in procession round the sacred edifice whilst the 'Hosanna' is sung. The palm branch, myrtle, and willow, are usually bound together by means of leaves of the palm tree; some used to add golden bands to these leaves.

The frail and delicate booth, only erected for a brief span, is also a symbol of human frailties and imperfections, and of the short tenure of our lives.

Just before the festival time, the streets and alleys of Whitechapel, where the poorer, but not the less observant classes of the

Jewish population live, are filled with anxious and eager buyers. They surround the itinerant vendors, who display on their little barrows a tempting profusion of fruit, foliage, and ornaments of all sorts, and they expend their hardly-earned money upon trimmings and trappings for the booth of the incoming holy-day; or, in the words of one of the most distinguished members of the Jewish race:—

'The poor Jew rises early in the morning, goes to some Whitechapel market, purchases some willow boughs for which he has previously given a commission, and which were brought probably from one of the neighbouring rivers of Essex; hastens home, cleans out the yard of his miserable tenement, builds his bower, decks it, even profusely, with the finest flowers and fruits he can procure—myrtle and the citron never forgotten—and hangs its roof with variegated lamps. After the service of his synagogue, he sups late with his wife and his children in the open air, as if he were in the pleasant villages of Galilee, beneath its sweet and starry sky.'*

But the Jewish household, whom I began by introducing to you as celebrating the Festival of Tabernacles, are of a wealthier class, and their 'succah' is probably of a very beautiful description. The housewife and her friends have been engaged for several

* *Tancred.* By Lord Beaconsfield.

days in adorning the interior of the Tabernacle. Devout Jews really commence this work at the close of the Day of Atonement; five days before the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles; the idea being that some employment of a religious nature should testify at once to the reality of their contrition.

The evening meal is served at sunset, where, as usual, the members of the household are in Sabbath attire. The head of the house pronounces the triple blessing upon the wine, the feast, and the 'succah.' The evening is generally spent in cheerful, innocent recreation.

The festival now lasts for eight days, and on each day there is divine service in the synagogue. The seventh day is called *Hoshanna Rabba*, because on that day many prayers beginning with 'Hoshanna' are offered up, during the chanting of which seven processions round the synagogue are made. In the course of the festival, passages are read from King Solomon's beautiful and expressive prayer;* also, on the last day, the blessing of Moses, which he pronounced before his death;† both lessons being among the sublimest utterances in the litera-

* 1 Kings viii. 1–53. † Deut. xxxiii.

ture of the sacred writings, and yet adapted to the comprehension of the ordinary intellect. It would seem as if the Hebrew race, cognisant of the power and the charm that natural objects possess, allotted some of the very finest spiritual passages contained in the Old Testament to the festival which more than any other was connected with Nature. It may also be of interest to our readers to know that the liturgy used on this occasion makes copious references to natural objects, and contains some beautiful petitions for rain and dew, those two most important factors in hot countries.

The Feast of Tabernacles, which originally was a seven days' festival, but which, as I have said, is now of eight days' duration, merges into another festival, called the 'Rejoicing of the Law.'

It is obligatory that the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, should be read in the synagogue, once through, from beginning to end, during the year. When the last word of the last chapter has been read, the first verse of Genesis is resumed, so that there should be no pause in the reading of the law. The day on which this takes place is called the 'Sabbath of Rejoicing.'

It is the rule that one of the worshippers

in the synagogue should always be called up to the reading-desk, before the portion from the Pentateuch is to be read. He generally merely pronounces the customary blessings before and after the reading; but, if he be a good Hebrew scholar, he is invited to read the portion for this day. It is a special honour to be called to the reading, either of the last or the first section of the Pentateuch, and those who on the Sabbath of Rejoicing are thus honoured, are called respectively: 'Hathan Torah'—*i.e.*, bridegroom of the law; 'Hathan Bereshith'—*i.e.*, bridegroom of the beginning of the law.

From the age of thirteen, the Jewish boy is allowed to take his share in these proceedings, and on the Sabbath after his thirteenth birthday, he reads for the first time in public a lesson of the law, and is called *bar mitzvah*—a son of the Commandment. This ceremony coincides with that of confirmation amongst the Christian communities.

The whole Festival of the Tabernacles is called 'The Season of our Rejoicing,' and again we are reminded of the close connection that exists in the hearts of the Hebrew race, between their passionate love for the Torah

—*i.e.*, the law—and their grateful appreciation of the bounteous gifts of Nature.

The Jews had been agriculturists from early days; their literature bears the impress of their lives; its grand poetic imagery is chiefly taken from their observation of natural objects; they were interested in what concerned all humanity; in the genial sunshine; the fertilising dew; the cooling rain. Centuries of persecution and the consequent exile from the fresh and wholesome country into crowded and narrow streets, changed their habits and pursuits. They could not be agriculturists, so they took to commerce; and when all the most honourable callings were forbidden them, they brought their keen intellects and ready wit to bear upon barter and peddling. But on their festivals their hearts still go forth in prayer for the fertility of the land, and in praise for the unperishable gifts of God.

Returning again to the words of the statesman and novelist: 'The vineyards of Israel have ceased to exist, but the eternal Law enjoins the Children of Israel still to celebrate the vintage.' *

* *Tancred.* By Lord Beaconsfield.

PRINCESS SABBATH.*

I AM going to repeat to you a quaint and touching little story, told in his own quaint way by the poet Heinrich Heine. You know very likely that Heine was a German Jew, who lived not so many years ago but that many who are now living can remember him, and yet long enough ago to have seen his own race cruelly and hardly treated. It might be very difficult to us, the inhabitants of this tolerant country, to understand how hard the poor Jew's life was made for him, by unjust laws and cruel customs, in the early part of this century, no further off than Germany, if we were not reminded by our unhappy co-religionists, who daily flock to this country, that some such state of things still exists in many provinces abroad. But in the days of Heinrich Heine, the name of Jew in Germany meant everything baseborn and ignoble, and he who remained a Jew in belief and name could never hope to enter any profession, or to look forward to any other

* Reprinted from the *Jewish Chronicle*, 1886.

career, than that of a trader or money-lender.

We need not wonder, then, that Heine should have invented this little fable, which he puts into verse for our benefit. A cruel spell once laid upon poor Israel—for this is the name under which Heine gathers up the whole race—forces him to live disguised under an ignoble form ; in this shape he is to be seen day by day in the grimy street, busy over his grimy work, the laughing-stock of the mob. But every Friday, at the witching hour of twilight, the spell is broken, and the poor, hardly human creature becomes transformed into a very prince amongst men. With head erect and proudly beating heart, he enters the vestibule of his Father's house, and there, where the lamps are shining and the choir is assembling, he goes to receive the Princess Sabbath. His very home, when he returns to it, is changed, and his ordinary meal becomes on that occasion a festive board. The Princess Sabbath remains with him for twenty-four hours ; she is rightly called the *quiet* lady, for she is really the personification of *rest*, or what we should call, in our English language, re-creation. She is modestly attired, and hides her long tresses under a veil, but

hers is nevertheless the pride and flower of beauty. Through her benign influence, Prince Israel spends many a happy pleasant hour, but he instinctively feels that all vulgar amusement or immoderate carousing would be an insult to her presence. With the returning twilight, Princess Sabbath melts away, and poor Prince Israel loses his human form, and resumes his drudgery of the week, until his Divine guest comes back to him on each recurring Friday evening throughout his life.

One evening, when I was sitting musing by the firelight, and thinking over the hard, often unsatisfactory, and even unlovely lives of the toilers and spinners in cities, this little poem, with its deeply touching meaning, recurred to my memory, and it seemed to me that, although the letter of Heine's words can no longer be applied to our Jewish brothers and sisters in England, yet the spirit of his poem bears an eternal truth. Princess Sabbath still comes each Friday evening in the gloaming, and still retains her magic gift of transformation. There are some of her people who go and receive her in the vestibule of her Father's house, as Israel did in the poem of Heine, and others may bring her into their own homes, which

are transformed into royal residences for that occasion, shining with the Sabbath lamps, and bright with family affection and brotherly love. But there are others whose only trysting place with Princess Sabbath is in the gay-lit street, crowded dancing saloon, and vulgar music hall. The quiet lady of Heine's poem, with her modestly veiled head, shrinks from such scenes, and grows powerless.

Thinking over these things, it occurred to me that in the very heart of London, in the midst of shops and crowded streets, within a stone's throw of theatres, music halls, and dancing rooms, one might open some fit place of reception for Princess Sabbath. Four walls, hung with bright pictures, telling mottoes, a table graced with flowers, and covered with papers, prints, and books, a glowing fire on the hearth, a strip of carpet in front of it, a good lamp, chairs that mean rest, and a few games that provoke innocent merriment, would be all that our palace requires; and I would write the word Recreation over the door. Then I should ask some kindly, genial woman to come and take possession of this domain, and to invite her toiling sisters in.

The influence of Princess Sabbath would

soon be felt. The transformation from tired, over-worked, irritable, low-spirited girls into bright, eager, joyous creatures would, I prophesy, not be difficult to effect.

Four requisites should contribute to the success of our undertaking.

1. Good wholesome refreshment.
2. Bodily rest.
3. Mental occupation.
4. Spiritual food.

There can be no doubt that the word recreation, if it be rightly understood, must mean the building up anew of the whole human being, of the body, the mind, the spirit. That is the transformation power given from time immemorial into the hands of Princess Sabbath. When she transformed the poor half-human Israel into the Prince, she re-created him, and if she is to prevent our poor hard-working sisters from losing their birthright, of a pure clean spirit in a fair, wholesome body, she must be able to continue her blessed weekly labour of re-creation.

Do they require it now, as they did in the days of Heine?

Mercifully times have changed since then, but the old need is still there, and will be there as long as the world lasts.

Ask the sempstresses, teachers, servants, employed and employers, if they do not need one day of rest in the seven?

Recreation is an elastic term; it may mean rest for one, movement for another, a book, a game, a song, a friendly chat, as the case may be. We should be sorry to press all requirements under one heading, or to make one garment to fit many different shapes. But we repeat that doubtful amusements, bringing in their train headache and heartache, can never be really re-creating. although they may for the moment have a spurious likeness to recreation. Besides which they destroy the taste for all really wholesome enjoyment, and are the first step on a way that leads further and further from home life and home surroundings.

Princess Sabbath never will be found in the music hall, dancing saloon, or even loitering at the street corners. To return to my Friday evening drawing-rooms, or, as they might be fitly called by the old word, withdrawing-rooms. Let us imagine that we have the room and the hostess and a few members, who will gladly combine to make the evening pass harmoniously. One of the members must be prepared to keep the room clean and neat, to have a bright

fire burning and chairs comfortably placed. Another should take charge of the tea and coffee, which must be hot and good, so that it may really refresh the visitors. Another should sort the papers and books which, let us hope, some kind friends who are unable to take part in the proceedings may bestow upon the little community, and a fourth may master the games and take them under her special protection. As these evenings are dedicated to Princess Sabbath, many harmless little enjoyments, such as needle-work, painting, playing the piano, &c., will be impossible,* but part-singing from the tonic sol-fa might be encouraged; reading aloud, reciting, and every kind of innocent game may be indulged in.

Before the evening closes, as a fit reminder that Princess Sabbath is welcomed by those assembled, let the presiding member or hostess read a few verses from one of the Psalms or chapters of the Bible, and say a few words to the girls that they may store in their memory, which will help to brighten their week of toil. Do not let them forget that they will not find true

* It should be remembered that this little account, with its plea for Sabbath Recreative Evenings, was written some years ago.

recreation unless the spirit, given us by God, is fed as well as the body. There will be no unfitness in finishing the evening in such a way, for innocent, healthy enjoyment *may* well be consecrated by prayer. I believe that those last few moments, if rightly understood, would in time be specially prized by the girls, who might be encouraged to come with any doubt or difficulty to their hostess.

Their hands must strengthen hers ; their lives must bear the impress of her recreative power ; their example must induce others to open more royal residences for those countless ones whose name is Israel, and who are in daily peril amongst the pitfalls of our London streets.

AN EPISODE.*

Two friends were walking together on a beautiful summer's evening, they had left the trim walks of the shrubbery behind them, and were passing through an old-fashioned and picturesque village.

Evening service was about to begin, the church bells were chiming softly in the evening air, as the villagers were making their way along a pretty winding path that took them through a lych-gate, and then under a short avenue of chestnuts to the old-fashioned church door. It was a peaceful, rustic scene, and the friends paused in their walk to watch it for a moment. They were both young men between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, and each bore the stamp of the race to which he belonged on his face and in his bearing. The one had the fair and ruddy colouring of the Saxon, the broad shoulders, the light easy gait of a man who excelled in athletic sports, whilst the other had the marked features, the dreamy eye, the dark hair of one whose ancestors were of Eastern origin, whilst his

* Reprinted from the *Jewish Chronicle*, March 17th, 1901.

somewhat delicate frame rather bespoke the student than the athlete.

The fairer of the two heaved a sigh half of content, half of regret. '*That*,' he said, 'is a picture I can always look upon with pleasure, although I fear I may have outgrown, or rather grown away from some of the teaching I used to hear within those walls. But the Parish Church contains a whole chapter of sentiment and romance; there is nothing quite like it in the world, and I come back to it from many an excursion into doubt and speculation, feeling as I used to do in the old days when——'

'When,' interrupted his companion, 'when, my dear Ernest, you were somewhat bored at the long service, and were probably not paying much attention to the sermon, and little less to the prayers. Judging from what I hear from my numerous friends amongst school-boys and undergraduates, there is not very much feeling or sentiment about them for the Parish Church, or any other church.'

'You cannot get boys, or even undergraduates, to speak their minds freely upon such subjects, Reuben,' said Ernest, smiling, 'they are reticent creatures, and hate show-

ing their real feelings, but what can *you* know about a Parish Church, and how can *you* gauge our sentiment on such a subject?'

Reuben coloured slightly. 'Certainly,' he said, 'I am not putting the synagogue into competition with the Parish Church, although for sentiment and romance, old fellow, you cannot beat the old, dark, weird synagogue at Prague, which recalls the steadfast faith and martyrdom of those who lived in the Middle Ages, I do not think you could match that building.'

'I know, I know,' put in Ernest, hurriedly, 'and there are Protestant and Catholic churches that might be classed with that old synagogue for the romance that clings to them; but that is different to the Parish Church; the church of our childhood, the church where the children are baptized, where the boys and girls of the village are confirmed, and for the first time in their lives are admitted to the mystical sacramental feast, where the bride comes in all her wedding finery, where the village choir performs to its own intense satisfaction, if not to that of other people; where each event of the village is, as it were, chronicled; think of all our festivals—where at last the villager brings his beloved dead

"in the sure and certain hope of Resurrection." Our religion, our love, our hopes, our sentiment, all seem to centre in that little building. I know every inscription on the walls, I have studied each coloured pane in the windows, and when I hear the children singing "Abide with me," or some such well-known hymn, it gives me a lump in my throat. It is the very simplicity and homeliness of the place that nerves me and helps me to realise that there must be something at the bottom of all the teaching, which is the real thing, more than the teaching itself.'

'Well, you are getting rather beyond me,' said Reuben, 'something at the bottom of all the teaching, and yet not the teaching itself. Now, let me think what I can recall of my early experiences: Visits to the synagogue on festival days, and occasionally on Sabbaths, then I can see myself a small boy in my "Talith,"* standing at the reading-desk as "Bar Mitzwah,"† singing out the chapter in a high childish treble; then one or two wedding ceremonies when I stood close to the "Chuppah," particularly intent on watching whether the bridegroom would perform his duty well, in

* Praying shawl. † The youth who is being confirmed.

breaking the glass into numberless atoms.* I have spent the long hours of our great fast in the synagogue, and very interminable they have seemed to me, and I have heard many a sermon on the duties and privileges of our race. But, no, the synagogue does not seem bound up with my life like the Parish Church does with yours, and if I were religiously inclined it would be rather the teaching that I have heard there than the place itself that would cling to my memory and stimulate me to action. I do not think we have any place of worship, we modern, somewhat unorthodox Jews, that can claim comparison with one of these homely buildings to which you always seem to return with love if not with faith, and that love has stood many a man in lieu of his early faith,' he continued, half musingly, 'indeed it may have become the foundation of a wider and more comprehensive faith.'

'Well, now you are decidedly getting beyond me, said Ernest,' noticing a gathering cloud on his friend's brow, and not wishing the conversation to take a polemical turn, 'see what a splendid sunset the sky

* This is to symbolise that it should be as impossible to break the union of the newly-married couple as to mend the broken glass.

is preparing for us, if there be a heaven up there, as my dear old Nanny so fervently believes, it is now going to reveal its glories to Jew and Gentile alike.'

At that moment the organ pealed forth, ably played by the young hand of an ambitious school-teacher, and the friends were silent, whilst the choir sang, 'Lead, kindly Light,' to the best of their abilities.

On the following day Reuben returned to his usual work and his London home. He was still musing over the recollection of the talk he had had with his friend, and it was uppermost in his mind when he tapped half playfully at a door leading into a room at the end of a wide passage, overlooking so quiet a street, that the occupant could not be disturbed by the busy hum of the Metropolis. She was seated at a writing table, littered with papers, her head in her hands, deeply studying or deciphering some long letter evidently in a foreign tongue. Her soft 'come in' brought Reuben to her desk; he advanced stealthily, and putting his hands out, suddenly obscured his sister's vision by passing them over her eyes. She started with a gay little laugh: 'Reuben, silly fellow, it can only be you,' and she turned towards him. She was his

twin, his second *ego*, as he called her; his double, as their father used to nick-name her; his *Egeria* as friends whispered.

'Lea, I want to tell you all about it,' he began.

'About what?'

'Oh, I hate beginnings,' he said quickly, 'but I want your wise head, so just listen, and put down that horrid letter, covered with an abominable German hand.' And he told her of his talk with his friend, which seemingly had moved him more than he liked to own.

Lea's large, dark eyes were fixed on her brother as he spoke, the steady sweet lips relapsed into a smile, whilst the colour somewhat deepened in her cheeks. The hand that held the letter shook a little as she repressed the merest apology of a laugh, and said at the end of Reuben's narrative, 'Well, this letter has not come amiss, after all.'

'What do you mean, Lea?'

'May I read it to you?'

'I would rather listen to you.'

'You shall do both, Reuben. Your friend's eloquent and touching little apostrophe to his Parish Church has not fallen upon unsympathetic ears; I can follow him and can understand your difficulty in meet-

ing or replying to such an argument—in fact, I could enlarge upon it.'

'Dear Lea, when could you not put yourself into another's position?'

She held up her hand. 'I have been puzzling my brains over questions that run on the same lines lately——'

'Such as, Lea?'

'Such as our half-empty synagogues in spite of the splendid work done by our ministers, and by many of our people, the weak response from our community at large; yet the existence of a very real, vivid faith amongst us.'

'The story of putting new wine into old bottles,' interrupted Reuben.

'Not quite that,' said Lea, 'but I found an understanding friend in Dr. Schmidt.'

'That old fellow at Breslau?'

'The very same; you know what a happy time I spent in his family last year. I have been lately in correspondence with him, and this letter might interest you.'

'Read on, sage sister.'

She had looked through the pages, and seemed to begin at haphazard:—

'Well, my dear Fräulein, permit me to say that the Jewish people are in danger of forgetting that which they never could forget in the old Ghetto days, that their religion is essentially a

religion of the home and not of the outer life. Deprived of the Temple, the Sanctuary, the Priesthood, the religion of the Jews retreated, or rather took its stand in the inner domestic life of the nation. No synagogue, however stately its structure, however grand the ritual, could supply that religious home life that used to be the great legacy of the Jews. The events usually chronicled in the Parish Church of a happy English village, where squire and people live in friendly intercourse, were chronicled in the Jews' home life.

'Does he not go through his doorway and cross his threshold under a Divine precept? Are not blessings and prayers appointed for every domestic occasion? On his return from synagogue is not the "Bar-Mitzwah" surrounded by a loving family party? is not the Hebrew grace that he pronounces at the festive meal a part of his confirmation duties? Has the sanctity of the marriage tie ever suffered when it was customary to place the "Chuppah"* in a drawing-room instead of in a synagogue? and is a "Kaddish" † spoken in a mourner's house less solemn than when chaunted in public? The father of the family is the Priest of the household. Think of the Passover service, essentially a family gathering, where the children have no insignificant part to play; picture to yourself the "Succoth,"‡ that half picturesque,

* Canopy for wedding ceremony.

† Prayer for mourners.

‡ The Booth erected for the festival of the Harvest,—Tabernacles.

half comical structure in which prayers and merry-making alternate. Recall the "Chanukah"* evening and the lighting of the candles, do not forget the Sabbath itself—the Princess Sabbath of Heine, meaningless, indeed, unless it be the day of rest for the entire family. *Our* Holy of Holies is in the house; our Ten Commandments are jealously guarded by the purity of our family life. Besides which——'

'Stop! in mercy, Lea,' said Reuben. 'I fear I can hardly say "amen" to all your friend's letter; as we two are alone we can afford to be rigidly accurate, we have not got to play up to any one, and we have no need to hide the desert places, of which, alas! there are too many in our spiritual life. The outside element does not always help us, and the inner religious life wants feeding and nourishing.'

Lea pointed again to the letter, and leaning affectionately against her brother, she read on:—

'The religious teaching of the young in our Community has not kept pace with their secular teaching. The possibility of following all professions, as is happily the case in free countries, such as England, has changed the curriculum of Jewish school and college life. The old order is passing away. But surely the teaching of religion, and by

* *See* Maccabees.

religion I mean ethical as well as denominational religion, should be placed in capable hands, in hands that will so fashion the character of the child, that right conduct should be the natural outcome. Such teaching will not fall upon barren soil.'

'Lea, you have got a wise friend in Dr. Schmidt, he is right, there is the crux—but where are the teachers? Where are the teachers who will teach with the heart as well as with the head? who will have understanding enough to combine what I will call "The Jewish Church sentiment" with such instruction as would be palatable to us Westernised Jews? I think I begin to understand what Ernest meant when he said, "It is not only the teaching, it is something besides the teaching, or beyond the mere teaching, that remains with us to the end of our days."'

'It is,' said Lea, looking intently into her brother's face, 'that teaching that leads us to realise with head and heart the truth of those wonderful words:—

'The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.

'I believe,' said Reuben, rousing himself from a kind of reverie into which he had fallen, 'that some of my orthodox and un-

orthodox friends are about to give a great dinner (when shall we English people be able to escape a dinner ?) to collect funds for the Jewish Religious Education Board. They have had the good fortune to secure an invaluable Chairman* who has the object of the dinner greatly at heart, and there are sure to be some good, telling speeches ; our people are witty, and seldom dull or heavy.'

'No,' said Lea, smiling. 'That reminds me of a conference of women that I once attended (by-the-by, if men cannot escape dinners, we women cannot escape conferences), and in reading the reviews of the meetings on the following day, I came upon this paragraph, which clung to my memory :

'Unless the writers of papers be of American, Irish, or Jewish origin, their literary productions, though full of valuable information, would probably be very dull.' †

Reuben laughed. 'And I,' he said, 'who was just going to mention that Ernest and his "Parish Church" might possibly help me through the speech that I may be bold enough to make at the coming dinner.'

'What, you, Reuben !'

* The late Leopold de Rothschild.

† Quoted from one of our daily papers at the time of a Conference of the N.U.W.W.

ROUND THE TEA TABLE.*

Five o'clock tea on an afternoon in April. A pretty drawing-room, with windows facing the fresh-hued gardens of a Square; a fragrant wood fire burning on the hearth, a big bowl of daffodils and wild hyacinths on an *étagère* as a charming note of colour, the dainty tea-tables spread, the guests arriving. The hostess, a delicately featured woman, moving quietly amongst her friends, somewhat older than they, with the demurer, more self-restrained manner of a former generation; her visitors, about half-a-dozen in number, in spite of their fresh, well-cut clothes, look as if they belong to what many ladies like to call themselves—'Workers'; they enter the room quickly, shake hands in a rather business-like manner, and settle down to their tea as if they are in want of refreshment after a hard day's work. It is noticeable that most of them carry a small leather bag, well furnished with papers, and that from the châtelaine at their waist depends a note-book, a pencil, a diary, and similar useful articles. One of them con-

* Reprinted from the *Jewish Chronicle*, May 9th, 1902.

sults a watch that is strapped in a leather band to her wrist, which adds to her business-like appearance.

The hostess is clad in a trailing dress of a light grey fabric, which clings somewhat closely to her tall, shapely figure, whilst the skirt curls caressingly round her feet; she wears lace about her neck and shoulders, and her hair, that is well sprinkled with grey, is prettily covered by a little cap, a token, but no unpleasant one, of advancing age. She seems removed in dress and occupation from her friends, yet she welcomes them with great warmth, calls them by their first names, and looks carefully after their material comforts.

'Well, my dears,' she says, as she fills the cups and passes the cake round, and even her voice, with its somewhat slow and deliberate utterance, reminds one of leisurely days and quiet hours—'well, you have had a long Committee Meeting, for it is late.'

'We have been at it for nearly five hours,' said a bright-eyed, dark-haired young woman, sipping her tea contentedly; 'it was long and tiring, but not dull, and I think we have settled all the many details of our Conference to every one's satisfaction.'

'Indeed, Lydia,' said the hostess; 'what

a wise and capable President you must have. But you know how ignorant I am of all such things; Congresses and Conferences did not exist in my time. I have never, will you believe me, stood upon a platform in my life, nor read a paper in public, nor even put a question at a meeting.'

'Perhaps that is why you are so nice and as refreshing as your tea,' put in Lydia, smiling.

'I did not ask you here to flatter me,' said the hostess, with a slight contraction of her brows, 'but to instruct me. I want you to tell me something about Conferences in general and this very one in particular. What are we to hope for as a result? And will the result be worth the time and trouble spent upon it—eh, Miriam?'

The young lady addressed as Miriam coloured up a little, and said: 'I have attended several Conferences of the National Union of Women Workers,* and I have enjoyed some of the meetings very much, but I confess that my head has often been muddled at the end of the day, and I am not sure that the addresses have left a very lasting impression on me; still, I have a kind of idea that they are calculated to do some

* Now Council of Women of Great Britain and Ireland.

kind of people some kind of good, and upon the whole, I should be sorry if we had no Conferences to look forward to.'

'Oh, Miriam, what a poor advocate you are,' said a tall, fair young woman, who seemed to be the most energetic of the whole party. 'I know that in spite of fatigue, exhaustion, and even headaches, I would not give up the Conferences of the Union.'

'Not even when they occasion very hastily-eaten meals,' interpolated another of the guests. 'My husband used to grow enraged at my dashing through breakfast, forgetting to order luncheon, and leaving him to entertain the baby. Many Conferences might disturb family peace.'

'But this one will only last two days,' said Miriam, laughing, 'and I rejoice to think that instead of losing our identity in one of the big Conferences, we Jewish "working" women, are actually going to have one of our own.'

'I dare say,' put in the hostess with her quiet voice, 'that one and all of you are rejoicing at the stir and bustle that this Conference will bring into your lives, for that is the modern note. No one wishes to escape a bustle, or do anything quietly, or still less

to work or live her life by herself. You are all so gregarious ; you must have reading circles for study, guilds or clubs for play ; you cannot take an ordinary country walk nowadays, but you must be riding your bicycle or speeding along in a motor-car ; you cannot spend an evening employed upon a humdrum piece of needlework, but must be playing bridge or something of the sort. You cannot sing a ballad because you are one of a choral society ; if you visit the poor you have to belong to a settlement, if you tend the sick you must have been through an ambulance class, and you cannot drink plain water without being a member of a Temperance Society. Society seems bent upon claiming every hour of the day, and as some one wrote rather wittily, " Where is the time left for growing your own soul ? " ' And the gentle hostess sighed at the picture she had conjured up, but fearing that her words might prove unpalatable, she added quickly: 'Still, I can quite believe there is something stimulating in social life ; it may help some to accomplish dull, dry tasks that might otherwise remain undone. In all things there is a *pro* and a *contra*.'

The guests were silent for a minute or two, when a soberly, yet daintily-dressed

young woman, half rising from her seat and putting an arm affectionately within her hostess's, said, 'Will you let me say a word or two on the subject of Conferences—the real point, I believe, you wanted to discuss? I think they should be very carefully handled. We *can* overdo them. We *can* have too much talk, followed perhaps by too little action. We *can* entrust subjects to speakers who are not always judicious or tactful, and who, far from being experts, only gather their knowledge from second or third hand sources. Unfortunately, those who know a great deal about their subjects have not always a ready power of speech, others who speak fluently are often ignorant of facts.'

'And, my dear Esther,' put in the hostess, 'too much is often sacrificed to a name that will draw, to an agreeable personality, to a speaker well known on public platforms, whilst the woman who could impart the necessary knowledge is left on one side.' And Mrs. Merton glanced at the programme she held in her hand in a way that rather alarmed her guests. Did she take exception to any of the names she saw there?

'It is very difficult for us who only visit the poor occasionally in their homes,' put in

Lydia, apologetically, 'to give a very accurate account of their lives, nor can we, who mercifully only see the fringe of the evil that sins such as drunkenness and immorality entail, give very weighty testimony on these subjects.'

'And yet, my dear Lydia,' said the hostess, looking at her programme, 'the speakers at these Conferences are drawn, and will be drawn, just from the very class you are describing, whilst the *real* working women, who know far better than they do, may be listening and laughing in their sleeve all the time.'

Esther rose from her chair, and facing her hostess and the other guests, said, in her clear, distinct voice, 'This may and does happen undoubtedly, dear Mrs. Merton, and yet I know that a Conference of none but experts can be dull and spiritless; we then get crowded out by facts—we cannot see the wood on account of the trees. May I tell you the result of my experience? I have attended many Conferences in different parts of England, and I have drawn my own conclusions . . .'

'Which are?' exclaimed hostess and guests.

'As follows,' said Esther. 'I will try

and keep to the one point, the last one we have touched upon. All work, you will agree with me, requires sympathy to keep it alive, and workers depend in a great measure upon those who are not entirely absorbed by the work in which they are personally engaged. Now a Conference has the rare merit of bringing the worker and the sympathiser into close touch ; the woman who lacks accurate knowledge of facts, and yet has power of speech, finds that she must go and learn from the worker before she dares to open her lips in public. She stands amazed, often abashed before the quiet toiler ; her heart is stirred, her imagination is touched, a new interest has sprung up in her life, she determines to learn more, to observe more, to study more closely. She may not know a vast deal about the temptations of a drunkard or the misery of a betrayed woman, but she *can* see that the worker has grown grey in the service of humanity, and is breaking her heart over many an unsolvable problem. Then she, the *non-expert*, fresh—yes, fresh—from her afternoon drive, or from the serene comfort of a cheerful home, can by a few well-chosen words, coming straight from a sympathetic heart, give a great lift to the worker and her

work. I believe in the good—I mean the lasting good that Conferences have done. And then, dear Mrs. Merton, they have made people not only think more deeply, but go into subjects more thoroughly. The social life that you were poking fun at a few minutes ago—yes, dear, you know you were—has, I think, conduced to greater thoroughness. We feel ashamed of doing things badly in company, and the standard has certainly been raised for women's work all round.'

'Still,' said the hostess, smiling, 'in spite of Conferences, I am met by a good deal that is superficial, and scamped work is not *only* the property of bricklayers and plumbers. Yet I am willing to be converted by you, dear Esther, so please continue.'

'And then,' said Esther, hardly heeding the interruption, but pulling a delicate flower out of the bowl and pinning it into her dress, 'these Conferences take us out of grooves; out of grooves of thought, out of grooves of acquaintances, out of grooves of daily occupations. Perhaps,' she added, thoughtfully, 'they just help us to realise a little bit what life means to some people.'

'You are a splendid champion,' said the hostess, putting out her hand to her friend.

'I could listen to you for much longer whether on the subject of Conferences or anything else.'

'Oh, but I have not done with the result of Conferences,' said Esther, sinking down again into her easy-chair. 'I look forward to the introduction of our Provincial Jewesses to their London sisters. When the Conferences of the National Union meet, it is most amusing to see the friendly gathering of women from all parts of England, Scotland, and Wales. I have made some valued acquaintances in this way, and some of them have grown into very close friends. We shall probably have much to learn from those who, living quieter lives than we do, have more time to think and to mature their schemes. What giants some of them are at work, and how generous and self-sacrificing they can be! The Conference will not, I feel now, end barren of result; our President may have some scheme to unfold that will require just the sympathetic help of women workers from our Provincial Communities. Such a scheme may run like a silver thread through the whole Conference, and may prove of great and untold good if it comes into practice.'

'Well, Esther, I think you have won

your cause,' said Mrs. Merton, gratefully; 'my best thanks, our best thanks, are due to you, are they not?' she added, turning graciously to her other guests.

'I should like to second that vote of thanks,' said Lydia, in the most modern and approved phraseology.

'And I should like to bargain for a great many cups of tea, slices of delicious bread-and-butter, and cake such as these, at the close of our meetings,' added Miriam.

'Oh! you poor working women, exclaimed Mrs. Merton, with her beaming smile, 'do not forget that without my tea-parties the "Chapter on Conferences" would be deprived of its last word: Finis.'

OUR LIBRARY.*

When I was a little girl and first came to live in this village, there were no books for the use of the inhabitants of Aston Clinton —no village library, and this for two very good reasons. The first one: that many people could not read, for schools were few and teaching inadequate in those far-off times; and, secondly, books were far more expensive than they are now. Think what we can get for sixpence in these days! But for the last thirty years a village library has taken root, and has grown and flourished at Aston Clinton; there are nearly 1000 volumes, all attired like Quaker women in drab coverings—but not at all drab in their contents—on the shelves, and every fortnight, throughout the year, a patient librarian sits at the table, dealing out literary food to hungry readers. The world of letters has been opened to every man, woman, and child who can read. The wise old Talmudist said: 'Study first and act afterwards, because if you act without study your actions may

* Reprinted from the *Aston Clinton Parish Magazine*, December, 1904.

not be worth much.' And the truth of this saying has been well proved. The bookworm is often the chrysalis of the man of action.

I should like to group books under three distinct headings :—

1. Amusement. 2. Instruction. 3. Inspiration.

A village library—indeed, all libraries—should contain books that will answer to those classifications.

We want of all three sorts. Novels or story-books, historical and scientific books, and books with distinct moral and religious teaching. There are, besides, books that it would be difficult to classify because they really might come under two out of the three groups. Thus there are historical novels, and histories full of inspiration, and stories with religious tendencies. Poetry should also be given a place on our shelves, in our hearts, and in our memories. It touches our emotions, and it expresses more vividly and tersely that which prose may fail to make us remember. 'I can tell a nation by its songs' was a very profound remark. But poetry, I fear, is not much wooed by the ordinary reader. We want in our libraries : books that provide good, innocent amuse-

ment, healthy for mind and body; books that teach us how to live; and books that inspire us to emulate that which is noble in the lives of others, calling out the best that is in us. Inspiring books appeal in a direct manner to the spirit which, in our busy, workaday world, often runs the risk of falling asleep!

When we are ill we go to a doctor, we have to state the nature of our malady before he can treat us; so when we go and ask for a book in a library we ought in a measure to know what we want. Some people say: 'Anything will do. Give me just what you please.' That is a great mistake.

Do you want amusing, or teaching in any special subject, or lifting up a bit above your everyday employment? Which is it to be?

We have started a library in the village where we live in Norfolk, and there the subscribers are growing most particular. There are boys who always ask for tales of the sea; one man who is seriously going through all the old volumes of the *Graphic*; a bed-ridden lady who likes magazines containing accounts of royal personages; girls who show a marked predilection for works by Mrs. Wood; a pupil teacher who wanted

In Memoriam; a schoolmaster who was drawn towards Haydn's *Dictionary of Dates*; children who read all the fairy tales of other nations. The School Inspector once said to a class of children he was examining: 'Tell me something about *Ivanhoe* or *The Talisman*.'

No answer.

'Is there no village library here?' He turned towards one of the managers of the school who was present.

'Yes,' I replied.

'And no copies of Walter Scott?'

'Oh, yes,' I answered, 'some of that great novelist's works.'

'And no one here knows anything about Ivanhoe or Richard the Lion-hearted? Shame.'

So I set to work, and am telling the children something about those heroes of Scott's novels. What is the result? They are beginning to ask for the books in question, racing down to the Library on library days, hunting for what they want. Hard work for the Librarian, but very good fun. All education should consist in teaching us to think, and in making us wish to know more than we do. And a book can grow into such a different thing from what it

looks at first sight. It becomes almost a live thing: a teacher, a friend with a heart, a soul, and wings to bear us over the troubles of life.

But books that debase our taste, and that give us low views of the aims and ends of life, that make us only pleasure-seeking and ease-loving, should be shunned as dangerous and unwholesome companions.

Good luck to our Aston Clinton Library! May the readers become each year more numerous and more fastidious; may they grow in gratitude to the writers of books.

'For books we know
Are a substantial world, both pure and good.
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.'

'ICH DIEN' (I SERVE).*

I THINK most of us know the Prince of Wales' crest, the three feathers, and under them, as motto, two words in the German language: 'Ich dien,' or 'I serve.' Perhaps it may not be so well known why the Prince of Wales, the eldest son of our King, should own this crest and motto.

In old days nearly all men had to take their part in warfare, and could be called out at any moment to defend their country, or to fight in other countries. Their leaders, called knights, were clothed in complete armour on the battlefield and wore a helmet upon their heads; this helmet bore a distinguishing mark, sometimes it was an animal, such as a leopard, a lion, a dog, sometimes it was a flower, a plant, or a tuft of feathers. When the men were engaged in fighting they would close their helmets by pulling a kind of iron mask down to protect their faces, and they would only be known by the distinguishing mark or crest.

Many years ago—in 1346—when King

* Reprinted from the *Aston Clinton Parish Magazine*, July, 1905.

Edward III. was reigning in England, there was war between the French and the English people. The English had invaded France, and were conquering the French. The English King had a very brave son, called Edward, like his father; he bore as well the name of the Black Prince, because he always wore a suit of black armour. It was during a great battle, which took place in France—the Battle of Crécy, named after the place where it was fought—that towards the end of the day, the young Prince begged of his father to let him lead the last attack that was going to be made that day against the French. The King agreed, and he went with some of his followers to the top of a hillock, whence he could watch the engagement and come, if need be, to his son's assistance.

The Black Prince was victorious, and the French were put to flight. At the close of the battle the King and his son rode round the field, looking at some of their brave but fallen enemies.

Amongst the slain was the Blind King of Bohemia, who had been led into the field, and had died fighting. There he lay before the English Princes. Then Edward, the Black Prince, lifted the helmet from the

head of the fallen King; three black plumes waved from the top of it, and the words 'I serve' were written underneath. Reverently he placed it upon his own head, saying: 'Sire, with your permission, I will in future bear this as my crest and my motto, for to-day right loyally have I served both my King and my country.' And from that day to this have the three feathers and the words 'I serve' been the crest and the motto of each succeeding Prince of Wales.

Now, it seems to me that each one who is doing his duty to the utmost of his ability is loyally serving his King and his Country. The word *serve* can bear a noble interpretation, there need be nothing degrading about it.

The whole country, or rather the nation, is made up of human beings, some great, some lowly; some of high estate, others of humble origin; but the actions of each one of these human beings go to make up the estimate that other nations form of our country. Thus, if it were possible that every Englishman and Englishwoman were God-fearing in thought and honourable in practice, then our whole nation would stand before the world as a God-fearing and honourable one. We should indeed be de-

servedly called a loyal and patriotic people. And this is an ideal we should strive to attain.

In this glorious month of June occurs the anniversary of Coronation Day, and these are some of the thoughts it has suggested to me.

'LET THERE BE LIGHT.'

I NEVER can go to sleep without reading, even if it be only for a few minutes, and the want of a book keeps me awake mercilessly.

One evening, after I had been upstairs for about twenty minutes, and was just ready to jump into my bed, I discovered that I had left my book downstairs; so in dressing-gown and slippers I forthwith prepared to return to the drawing-room. This was before the days of electric lighting. The servants, either very careful or very sleepy, had hastened to close the downstairs apartments, which were now shrouded in darkness. I have a faculty for finding what I want in the dark, and knew that I could walk up to the table and put my hand on the required volume. But something stopped me on the threshold, perhaps the feeling that a darkened room always gives one, and I began to think as follows :—

'How strangely transformed is this room since last I was in it, so short a time ago! Then the lights were burning brightly and the aspect of the room was cheerful and inviting. There, I know, stands the piano which so recently responded to a brilliant touch, and added a harmonious cadence to a

sweet voice; there are the book-shelves stored with choice volumes for pleasant reading; there are the cosy armchairs where scraps of talk, suggestive and inspiring, seem still to linger; there are the pictures that bring colour and life to the walls; there are the bowls of flowers that had conjured a touch of summer into an autumn day. All these are there—yet not there—the absence of light has changed everything. The piano is dumb, the books unreadable, the pictures invisible, the chairs untenanted, the charm of the flowers gone for awhile—the soul, as it were, of the room absent.'

Then I groped my way to the window, uplifted a bar of the shutter, and a ray of moonlight streamed into the room. In a moment, I could discern by its gentle radiance the outline of those objects that made that room habitable and beautiful.

I found my book, it is true, and I carried it to my room, but I could get no pleasure in reading it that night. My thoughts would not let me read:

'Were there not many lives like that room—lives that were full of possibilities, and yet dark lives? The life of a woman who might have been a great singer or a renowned musician, but who, struggling with the black

cloud of poverty, could not arrive at the perfection she aimed at ; the life of an artist, whose hand had lost its cunning through years of dissipation ; the life of a writer, whose pen had been stayed by the cloud of sickness ; the life of the preacher or the teacher, whose home life had marred his public life ; the life of the innocent girl, whom circumstances had flung into corrupt and abominable associations. The darkness had come and obliterated the light in these lives—be it the darkness of poverty, of intemperance, of sickness, of tainted heredity or family misfortune. The possibilities may all have been there, but they were of no avail, for the shutters were closed.

There have been, however, men and women from all ages who, without any very special gift, without having necessarily been placed in very high positions or having been greatly considered by the world, have yet had the rare privilege of having been allowed to unfasten a bar in some shuttered life and of letting the light into dark places.

If it has ever been your lot even once to have let in the light, do not think that you will have lived your lives in vain.

May 6th, 1902.

THE AMENITIES OF LIFE.

An Address delivered at the Norwich Conference of the N.U.W.W., 1898.

When I was asked to read a paper at this Conference and was allowed to select my own subject, I chose one that I should call ethical rather than practical, although I felt that it was closely connected with the realities of life.

Now my experience of many years, amongst workers engaged in all manner of work, has strongly impressed on me the belief that work would be better done, with more serenity of temper and under more harmonious conditions, if the amenities of life were better considered. In the same way, life itself, as carried on in the home and the family, would run more easily and would therefore lead to happier results if these same amenities were regarded as necessaries, rather than as luxuries.

To-day I should like to say a few words on the amenities of life :—

1. In connection with public life ; and
2. As they affect the home or inner life.

As this is a Conference of women workers, it might be best to begin by the former, although I do not feel it to be the most important.

As you all know, in these days women take an active and practical interest in work of all kinds: in questions connected with education, philanthropy, legislation, medicine, nursing, &c., &c. Women of all classes, if I may use that objectionable word, of all ages, still more objectionable, and of varied brain power, meet on a common platform, and are perpetually coming across one another in their many and diverse walks of life. They are necessarily brought very much into prominence, and their social relationship with one another and with men has naturally been much extended. If they are capable, earnest, or brilliant women, they feel that they rightfully hold a certain power, that their words and their opinions carry some weight. This is but the natural result of the devoted lives they are leading, or of their intellectual distinction; when they rise to a really first-rate eminence, you will find that they often add humility to talent, and that they are modest about their own achievements.

The greater the work the greater should be the humility, for in nine cases out of ten the worker would feel that she has been outstripped by many others in the very path she has chosen, and if she has a generous nature she will admire the more thorough or successful competitor, and not spoil her humility by envy. If this be her frame of mind she will have a very clear notion of the amenities of life, and if she adds a certain grace or charm of manner and tact in her relation to other workers, she will not fail to bring about a little kingdom of heaven upon earth.

Good work can suffer from bad manners. Women with the best intentions, the highest motives and loftiest aspirations, can make themselves so intensely disagreeable that the work and the worker get cordially disliked.

Some people think that there is a certain bracing quality in being disagreeable. 'I always speak the truth' is a phrase we hear over and over again from the best of women —the best, but not the most tactful. 'I gave her a bit of my mind'—but why should it always be the most disagreeable bit? Why should not the truth be gently and kindly spoken; why blurted out into the face of some shrinking woman recipient;

why not left unspoken at times where it can do no good and can act but as a salve to the speaker's conscience ? Why say, for instance, without previous deliberation or thought to some friend engaged in a work that absorbs her life :—

'My dear Miss C., you are taking an immense deal of trouble about the subject in which you are interested, but really it is very unimportant, and it is a pity you should waste so much time over it ; I do not think you know or can be aware of how little importance it bears just outside your own circle.'

Poor Miss C. gives a shiver, goes home to reflect upon—not her own shortcomings, but the uselessness of her object in life—loses heart, works badly, and becomes a failure ; or she may give way to a burst of undignified passion that is not in keeping with the career she has mapped out for herself. Her tactless friend finds her another day, low and dejected, or hurt and revengeful, and starts at the recollection of her own words, spoken in the pride and strength of her own achievements. She may have ruined a life's work, but she only spoke the truth as she thought it should be spoken.

Again, Miss B. is very anxious to start some work on her own account ; she is just

settling in a provincial town, and believes that she will there find an opening for the philanthropic effort which she has at heart. She has made her plans, and full of vigour and energy is about to begin, when an old resident of the town, Mr. A., calls upon her and wishes to draw Miss B.'s attention to the fact that the same kind of scheme already exists in the town, that the two would overlap: would impoverish one another; that, in fact, the newer scheme is hardly needed. But Miss B., 'Pride in her port, defiance in her eye,' urges that her scheme must be the better; it is more matured; more up-to-date; has the benefit of her own vast experience. Mr. A. humbly suggests co-operation. That is too much for Miss B.! Assured of her own powers and the splendour of her own scheme, she advises Mr. A. to let the work, to which he has given some of the best years of his life, die a natural death, as she will not give way —no, it would be against her principles; against all that she has held and taught for years; so the older charity goes to the wall; some may be deeply wounded; others well-nigh ruined in the process; the little town is divided by strife and contention; there are two factions that will never be united.

Miss B. has won the day—but at what cost! The amenities of life are torn to shreds, and the very work itself must suffer.

Here we might recall Æsop's fable, where we read how the traveller wore his coat in the wind, and shed it in the sunshine—in the same way the prejudices that cling to men and women in the face of opposition have a trick of melting before the sunshine of a genial manner; thus a point may be gained by concession, or by an amiable way of disagreeing, when it would never have been carried in heated argument or by determined resistance.

Then there is the Philanthropist who is afraid of making herself too pleasant. Honied words, kind glances, a gentle voice, may be all very well for those who are lax in their morals, and easy in their lives, but the rigidly good, and the reformer, must not give way to luxuries in any shape or form. This is well exemplified in a clever little book that appeared some years ago, called *The Owlet of Owlestone Edge*, where a clergyman's wife, significantly named Mrs. Badger, is accredited with the following remark:—

'I thought the old man would be the better for a little wine, for he seems very weak and fail-

ing, so I sent him a pint of port, putting a lump of camphor in it by way of precaution.

'Precaution, my lamb!' exclaims the horrified husband.

'Yes, Mr. B., nobody will drink port with pleasure that has camphor in it.'

Public speaking amongst women has brought about regard to manner and diction such as was never known before. If only the soft and pathetic voice were in all cases the organ of a conciliatory spirit and a generous nature! Not that I would wish the regard for the amenities of life to discount straightforward speaking. Some persons in their desire to be pleasant or to please, are prone to gloss over, or evade, a disagreeable yet necessary statement; they conceal their own opinions or views in order not to wound the feelings of a beloved parent or much-valued friend; they demur from giving the one word of advice or warning which might have proved invaluable, and in their desire to be sympathetic they lose their single-mindedness and love of truth. The balance should be strictly kept between a tactless manner of stating unpleasant things and a sympathetic manner that is hiding a falsehood; and above all, the speaker or worker should, however un-

popular it may make her, hold fast to what she thinks right and true.

And now as to the amenities of life in regard to the home existence :—

Why should good manners only appear with our best clothes ? It is really far more necessary to conciliate those nearest and dearest to us than the stranger whom we may seldom see. Home life can be made delightful or the reverse by observing or disregarding the amenities of life; for instance: an evening where every member of the family contributes some iota to the general cheerfulness of the hour, and in so doing invigorates the weary bread-winner or hard-worked housewife for the morrow's work—as opposed to the fireside where each one sits apart engaged in his or her favourite pursuits, oblivious of the fact that the evening should be a time of general recreation and exchange of ideas : the hour of poetry in the prose of life. This should apply very particularly to the young, who, in these days of extended education and lofty pursuits, are sometimes contemptuous of the little things that make the old happy.

English boys are trained to be courageous, why not to be courteous to their sisters and sisters' friends ? English girls, who, running

their brothers hard at work and at play, are developing into splendid young goddesses of height and form, should not forget to be gentle to their less fortunate elders, who have not had their chances with the tennis racket or the golf club. Husbands and wives, after the first few weeks of conjugal felicity, should not startle, maybe disgust one another, by a lapse into careless, unmannerly ways, that rapidly degenerate into positive rudeness.

The amenities of life should surround home life, should make it beautiful, sacred, indestructible.

As a sense of humour gives us a true sense of proportion, so does a feeling for the amenities of life give us an instinct of real sympathy with others; the sympathy that makes it blessed to receive as well as to give.

Some people in their ardour for work or the serious side of life, neglect that which makes it beautiful and attractive; they forget that Dame Nature is not sparing with her amenities; that she embroiders the meadows with gold; that she trails the water-lily in her streams; that she paints the sky with colours that drive the artist to despair.

Time is not wasted in adding to the amenities of life ; the comfort and elegance of our living-rooms, the careful arrangement of flowers, the harmony of colour, and the sweet strains of music, all add to the pleasure of existence, bringing about legitimate happiness, such happiness as is not locked up in one person's breast, but overflowing, thus making the lives of many brighter.

If a master or mistress of a large establishment has courteous manners and a genuine regard for the feelings of others, it is probable that the servants will catch the prevailing tone, and a spirit of refinement and good breeding will insensibly gain a footing in such a home.

No home life can be perfect without sympathy ; no public life can be at its best without a tactful, spontaneously generous feeling for others : in a word, the fine manners that come from a good heart are essential to both. Fine manners are not a veneer, they are a pervading reality ; they add a delicate charm to the most beautiful form and face, as well as to the homeliest ; we may liken them to a radiant sunset, which in itself may not be of any practical use in the universe, but which can and does glorify equally one of Nature's sublimest scenes

and the quiet meadow of an English homestead.

As there are colour-blind people in the world, so there may be some to whom beauty in its many and different shapes does not appeal; but these are exceptions to the general rule of human beings. We can all cultivate one form of beauty—beautiful manners, and in so doing, we are really adding to the graces of the soul and the heart on which depend the amenities of life:

> 'For manners are not idle, but the fruit
> Of loyal nature and of noble mind.'

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

delivered at the Edinburgh Conference of the National Union of Women Workers, 1902.

I FEEL sure that I am expressing what we, who have met for this Conference, must all feel: namely, that the fact of our assembling in this noble, historic capital of the North, the centre of so much intellectual and philanthropic effort, will give, not merely an impetus, but also a peculiar charm to these gatherings, which might have been absent had our meetings been held in other surroundings. The romance of history and the history of romance still cling to the picturesque streets of this old town; most of us have made their acquaintance already through the pages of the great novelist, and immortal poet, who lived and wrote on Scottish soil.

If our imagination be fired by the stories of the past—and could any philanthropic work exist if it were not for the sympathy that is born of imagination?—no less are we roused and stimulated by the facts of the present day, by the knowledge that Edinburgh has always been to the front in all matters connected with practical work, and

that the position of Scottish women in connection with the educational and municipal life is one that must appeal to a Union of Women Workers.

To me it seems that the very existence of the National Union of Women Workers is a stimulus both to our imagination and sympathy. The Union brings into touch with one another not only organizations of workers, but also the isolated workers themselves. A lonely worker, her brain busily employed in schemes for making life brighter and more varied to the inhabitants of some sequestered village lost among the hills, or standing on some solitary shore, need no longer feel that she must struggle on by herself; the Union stretches forth a cordial hand; the Union tells her how she can obtain books to help, how she can find friends to advise; the Union opens out to her that wider world of ideals, which to many of us has been the promised land, difficult of entrance. Into that land the Union may serve as a guide. If *Association* be the watchword of the future, then the Union is actively employed in putting this word into practice. If *Efficiency* should be our aim, both in political and municipal life, as well as in our philanthropic work, then let us recognise

that the Union is doing its best to promote efficiency amongst women.

It would be useless for me to attempt to deal at any length with the questions that confront us during this Conference week, but a cursory glance at our programme will tell us that we are chiefly concerning ourselves with : (1) Education ; (2) temperance in its many aspects ; (3) the wage-earning of women and children, not only at home, but abroad ; (4) the permanent care of the feeble-minded ; and last, but not least, (5) the very important question of amusement as it concerns life. On this last point, perhaps I may be allowed in passing to say that had this Conference been held some years ago the subject of amusements would not have been included in our programme.

We are now awakening to the fact that recreation or amusement does form an important factor in every life. The England that went into prison, according to Matthew Arnold, some two hundred years ago, has forcibly broken the lock and is calling out loudly for her share of light and laughter. Amusement the present generation will have, and if we do not provide them with an innocent form of it, they will take for themselves dangerous substitutes. Amusement is

a weapon for fighting vice, impurity, Hooliganism, call it what you will, and those who apply heart and mind to the task of securing innocent amusement for others are really doing a fine work.

They open the door to a deeper influence over the minds to which they have gained access, by evincing an understanding of the lighter side of life. And it is of real importance that the providing of amusement should not be left entirely in the hands of those who may have no interest or deep religious convictions, and who use recreation either as a way of money-making for their own advantage, or merely as an end in itself, but not also as a means to an end : the elevation of character. There are no greater enemies to a spiritual life than an empty mind, and the whole gamut of miserable and degraded feelings that are often the result of that one expressive word, *ennui*. I should wish to dwell longer on this subject, but, as a whole evening is to be given up to papers and discussions bearing upon it, there is no fear that it will not be well and exhaustively dealt with.

How many experienced workers do I not see before me this morning! Experts in many important subjects and in many dif-

ferent fields; those who have become experts by practical work as well as by intellectual study!

Now, however widely apart we may be in our action or methods of work, we are, I imagine, agreed upon the principal foundations on which we intend to build, therefore we must recognise how important it is that our public and our private life should be absolutely harmonious. Between these there often seems to be a chasm or a rift. The private and public life of the same individual do not always appear to belong to one another, do not fit into one another—the one affords no index to the other. Principles carefully enunciated from the platform may never have been brought to the test of private life; they are merely acquaintances whom we have not met on terms of intimacy at that difficult place—our own fireside, and in the company of those poor souls who have to live with us. For example, we may find it easier to treat with tolerance and open-mindedness people whom we meet occasionally than those who are nearest to us, for one obvious reason, that we are more easily affected by those whom we care most for. Thus, a trick of manner, a form of speech, a silly joke on the part of one of our home

circle, may so unpleasantly touch us as to cause us to be unfair or intolerant, whilst it often happens that we are able to sit composedly through a long Committee Meeting, or upon a platform, listening to remarks or speeches that run counter to our own views; not only do we sit there composedly, but we are able to show those who differ from us that we can and do understand and appreciate their opinions.

Take another instance: Many public speakers are justly fond of expatiating upon the great and beautiful quality of sympathy. But sympathy very likely plays a greater part in our public than in our private life. For it is no doubt easier to sympathise with some great tragedy that suddenly leaps up, as it were, into our vision, than with the small, mean, no less pitiful tragedies of daily life. These have a painful habit of taxing all our powers of endurance and all our fund of patience, and then anger or irritability takes the place of the divine quality of pity—which is, perhaps, sadder for us than for those having need of our sympathy.

Further, we are driven to confess at times that the public life of the individual woman seems to be on a very different level to her private life. This is not altogether astonish-

ing. Our public life must be the more conscious and active expression of our ideals, not always attainable in home life. In public life we have, to a certain extent, the reins in our own hands, by choosing our work and our associates; in private life we must take the duties and associates that we find awaiting us; in the one we are more able to shift the outlook, which brings some freshness to us; in the other the outlook does not change, we have to bring freshness to it. Granted that there are instances where a palpable reason or excuse for this apparent incongruity between the public and private life of one and the same individual may be found, this should not blind us to the danger of such a discrepancy—a danger to ourselves and to others. At first we may find it difficult to dissociate the two lives, to have, as it were, two moral standards; for instance, to preach honesty and economy from the platform, and to practise careless extravagance at home; to insist upon strict integrity in the management of public affairs, and to be content with a very shifty arrangement of the domestic exchequer; to uphold in public a severe rule of life, and in private to tolerate and adopt a low and easy standard of living. I have no doubt that we start by honestly

wishing and intending to act up to what we seem to be; on the other hand, there may be cases where we secretly have a sneaking inclination for the easier mode of life, or for some darling sin; at all events, the moral sense must grow warped, then blunted by such gymnastics, until we are fairly launched upon a life of hypocrisy, such as we have seen so admirably depicted by our great novelist, George Eliot, in the character of Tito, and drawn with terrible truth by Stevenson in his striking story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The more perfect we become in our power of separating the life of our ideals from the life of our practice, the more fatal, the more deadly will it be to our character. I mention this word with fear and trembling, so deep is its importance, so difficult is it to attain. Right conduct is the result of character; it is therefore obvious that character is more essential to public work than either talent or even genius. On neither of these two gifts does right conduct depend. But upon character rests the power of bringing about a true relationship between the public and the private life of the individual. Without character, that true relationship is in danger, and without that relationship our public work runs the risk of becoming

hollow and a sham. Nay, more, such a discrepancy will in time become a serious danger.

We all know that the preacher whose actions are the very reverse of his exhortations, brings contumely upon his church, if not upon his creed. In the same manner, a woman whose public life runs counter to her private life, brings the whole question of women being admitted or encouraged to do public work under severe criticism. And women who within the last few years have been carried to the front with so great a rush have had but little preparation for the public work that some of them are doing so well. That which men learn in their teens at school, women have had less opportunity of acquiring ; indeed, for many centuries men have been trained in the business of life to act according to certain conditions or rules, so that their sense of honour works almost mechanically and intuitively. Yet if women are adequately to occupy their new positions, and bear with credit their wider responsibilities, they must cherish those indispensable qualities which go to the making of character, and therefore of right conduct. Amongst them I place reverence for truth and a keen sense of honour. Not that the world of workers should be sharply divided into men

and women; for the one must supplement and co-operate with the other.

These Conferences of Women Workers are apt to give outsiders an idea that we wish to work alone independently of men. This is far from being the case. But our work in connection with men may be better accomplished if we are allowed these opportunities for calm deliberation, and for mature discussion. Men, were they sitting with us in conclave, might probably grow restive and impatient, and might hurry us to our conclusions, besides which there are many subjects that we can only discuss freely in the company of our own sex. Women have often been accused of not having a due sense of proportion, and of not seeing the relative value of things as men do. I think this may be true; also that it is due not to any inherent quality in their nature, but that they have not hitherto had so much experience of large questions as men, and that their training has taught them to deal more with detail. Thus, they are generally invaluable as inspectors, where their power of grasping detail leads them to the detection of such abuses as a male inspector might never discover.

We all know how men first feared the

presence of women on Boards, then tolerated them, and finally confessed, somewhat reluctantly, that they *were* capable of doing good work. Yet women, just because they become so desperately in earnest about their work and have less distractions in the way of recreation, society, physical exercise, and the like, than men, must bear being occasionally called 'tiresome' by their male fellow-workers. But this may be an unwilling tribute to the thoroughness and excellency of their work; perhaps when they have gained the sense of proportion, and also a keener sense of humour (in which they are supposed to be lacking), they will add some of the larger views and lighter touches of the male workers to their own estimable qualities.

I think these meetings are valuable in helping each woman to take her own measure. It is possible that one living a lonely life in uncongenial surroundings, absorbed in her own occupations, may not have a fair estimate of what she really is capable of doing, and may either over-estimate or under-estimate her powers. She is her own standard in many such cases, and this can be a perplexing position, and may even affect her work. But when she finds herself, as she does here, one of many, and learns how

others have the same reasons for discouragement, the same disappointments to bear, the same hopes and the same fears, she suddenly finds, as it were, her own level, and realises her own rightful position in the working world. This may be rather a disappointing process, but it more often partakes of the nature of a healthy tonic, and braces up the nerves and courage of the worker. The experience she gains in these meetings will stand her in good stead when she has returned to her work, and the help she may in her turn be able to give to some fellow-worker will richly repay her for the trouble she has taken to travel long distances, and to sit through hours of discussion.

The lonely worker, eager and enthusiastic, may, and often does, grow intolerant of criticism. At these Conferences, where subjects are fully discussed, she will learn to court criticism (particularly that which does not seem specially levelled at herself), and even to value it. In the same way, she may have become somewhat intolerant of other views than her own, somewhat narrow and rigid in her own line of work, she has for so many years been working by herself, or with a Committee she has dominated, and who hardly dare to differ from her. Yet

here, she meets fellow-workers with views widely opposed to her own, fearlessly stating their opinions, commanding attention, and actually suggesting new methods of work, to which she might not have paid much attention had they been expounded by one of her own Committee. She is forced to listen, tempted perhaps to assent, or to find a good reason for dissent, until at last she is gradually brought to the knowledge of the fact that there may be other conscientious women-workers, bent on the same goal as herself, but not quite taking her road to arrive at it. This may be very irritating to some minds, who look upon their old occupations as gone when the safety or convenience of the old road that leads to them is questioned. To learn how work may benefit by a tolerant and open mind on the part of the worker, is surely a valuable lesson for all.

To return for a moment to a consideration of this Conference. The subjects it embraces are many and varied, touching as they do on points connected with the educational, the political, and the social life of women.

Some may think them too numerous. It is more than probable that we shall be exposed to some such criticism as is often levelled at the Church Congresses, namely,

that the number of subjects taken are confusing, and that it would be better to give more time to fewer. Suffice it to say that the choice was made after careful deliberation and also in deference to our Scottish friends. They suggested and we acquiesced.

I venture to express the hope that these meetings may prove interesting and inspiring; that the papers may be helpful, leading in many cases to practical results; that the discussions may be conducted briskly, yet without temper; that the questions put may be so framed as to extract valuable information. If you will forgive me, I should like to point out that the invariable complaint at most Conferences is not that the subjects are too numerous, but that one half of the audience are unable to hear distinctly that which is read and spoken. Under the best conditions it is a physical strain to listen intelligently to a long paper, or to be actively alert to a discussion; but the strain may be considerably lessened if reader and speaker will kindly cultivate a clear and distinct enunciation, and a somewhat measured delivery. I hope you will not think it impertinent on my part to bring this frankly before you. We not only wish to give, but also to receive. The sympathetic attention that awaits the speaker

whose voice can be well heard is very different to the half-bored, half-listless attitude of those who can only make guesses at the meaning the speaker wishes to convey; and this difference of reception can and does visibly affect the success of a meeting. Disagreement is less depressing than indifference, as it is better at these gatherings to be wide-awake than half-asleep. But there will sound from time to time a voice that to some may bring relief, but that by others will be resented—I mean, the voice of the warning-bell. One of my predecessors in this office—a very gifted one, in whose footsteps I hardly dare to tread—said at the close of her Presidential Address—I will repeat her words :—

> 'It is not possible for the sound of the warning-bell to be other than startling and harsh, but I must plead my own infirmity when I claim kindred with the bell, and fear that I cannot always make a call to order from the Chair sound graceful and pleasant.'

Yet I know what store Mrs. Creighton set by these annual gatherings. She felt, as I do, that there is something particularly invigorating and refreshing in meeting our fellow-workers face to face; in being allowed to welcome those, the veterans in the warfare, as well as the recruits from whom we hope

so much. Reading an account of work done is often less inspiring than hearing it from the worker's own lips. And we recognise that which we sometimes are prone to forget, that the workers are not merely workers, existing for their work alone, but women capable of hoping ardently, of being disappointed bitterly, of aspiring to comradeship and friendship. It is a source of great pleasure to me, that I can distinctly trace some valued friendships to these our annual Conferences.

I look forward from year to year to seeing kindly faces, hearing cordial words of greeting from those, who, drawn from such different surroundings, join these gatherings. Yes, drawn from different surroundings, prompted by different motives, even acknowledging different creeds. Different as these may, and always will be, yet I venture to affirm that those who work in all sincerity and truth, are acting for the same ends, and are inspired by the same spirit—nay, more, that they are all worshipping under the roof of the same great House of God, although at different altars.

'For so the whole round world is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.'

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

delivered at the Cheltenham Conference of the National Union of Women Workers, 1903.

LAST year we assembled in the romantic and historic northern capital; to-day we find ourselves in one of the pleasantest of our English counties.

Our Conference for the first time in the existence of the Union will hold consecutive meetings in two distinct places; first, in Cheltenham, a busy centre of educational life; and then in Gloucester, under the shadow of one of our sublime old Cathedrals. Thus the two great forces (1) of intellectual activity, and (2) of religious sentiment, should combine to inspire and stimulate the speakers.

Two great subjects hold the field for discussion: Education and Hygiene. That of education will touch upon religious as well as secular instruction, upon Evening Continuation Schools, and upon the Sunday School of the twentieth century; that of hygiene embraces the training of one distinct branch of nursing, whilst one afternoon

will be devoted to the subject of Public Health and the Sanitary Authorities in relation to the rural population,

Miss Beale, to whose generous kindness we are indebted for the use of this really magnificent and inspiring Hall, will read a paper on 'Paid and Amateur Work' at the young ladies' meeting, and one evening is to given up to a discussion on gambling and speculation, an absorbing passion for which seems to have crept into every class of the community. I hope that the poison may not only be pointed out, but also the antidote.

The subjects for discussion, you will allow, are very important, dealing with the best conditions of life for men and women, and, if properly treated, should inspire each one of us here with a high and noble ideal.

But are we all agreed upon what we regard as an ideal? If we look for the word 'ideal' in the dictionary we shall find that it is 'a conception of something, a thing conceived in its highest perfection, an object to be realised or aimed at, a perfect type, a standard of perfection or excellence. It exists as an ideal or archetype—it is the conception of anything in its very highest perfection.' To me an ideal is also an

aspiration, for we make our ideals for ourselves, we dream them, but they contain more of ourselves than the so-called realities of our life.

A writer has said, 'Actions are but parodies of my real self,' therefore let us hope that we may not always be judged by our actions, for we know how often they must fall short of our ideals.

Childhood has its ideals as well as manhood. A child builds a castle of sand on the beach; maybe he has just read the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and with his mimic spade he constructs a Castle Doubting in a morning, or it is the fortress where Richard Cœur de Lion lies imprisoned, or the Tower of London where traitors are being executed. That heap of sand is very real to the child, not as a heap of sand, but as the castles of which he has been reading; it is the *ideal* of one of these castles, the bodiless substance conjured up by his brain, to him more real than a reality. If the child be imaginative, he will throw the whole force of his imagination into his conception; if of a clever, contriving mind, he will put his practical talent into the construction of the little fort, and will burrow tunnels and raise towers; if of a poetical turn, he will adorn

his building with all manner of designs, even to the creation of gardens and forests out of seaweed. If he be adventurous, he will introduce freebooters within the gates; if romantic, there will be a maiden to rescue from danger or infamy. And the mother, sitting on the seashore looking on, may silently comment upon the character of her child revealed by these imaginings; her intuition tells her what her little son aspires to; he wants to be an architect or builder; an engineer successfully surmounting natural difficulties; a landscape gardener with beautiful designs; a valiant redresser of wrongs. And then suddenly the child interrupts her day-dream, he is asking for some red and blue pieces of stuff that she is carrying in her work-basket; his mother has to join them into a flag, and, behold, a Union Jack flies from the tower of his fortress. 'So he will be a true Englishman,' she muses, 'and proud of his country.'

The cruel tide advances, and the Tower of London crumbles away, the child stands beside his ruin, bucket and spade in hand, but his ideals remain untouched. Were he some years older, the tide of life might possibly wash ideals as well as illusions away; but, in spite of the disappearance of

his castle, the child can still be an architect, engineer, landscape gardener, soldier, &c. The ideal remains with him, even when the substance is gone.

And so it should always be, for the ideals are the true life of man, and the way he lives by them an index to his character. They are our true possessions, for they are our own; created by our brains, warmed by our hearts, breathed into life by our faith and hope. They are not dependent upon the changes of fortune, ill-health, and adversity. They make us independent of environment, they have the power to bring the calm and peaceful country into the hot bustling streets of the town, and they have many a time sustained the drooping spirits of a worker who has no communion with women of her own calibre, and whose monotonous or commonplace pursuit carries no joy with it. They contain some grand elements, they have something of the make-believe and yet of the eternally true and real about them. But whilst the realities do not become ideals, the ideals can become realities —they are like souls waiting for bodies; how careful we should be of them, how we should cherish them, how we should prevent them from getting chilled and perishing!

How many little graves do we not keep in the graveyards of our heart of lost and perished ideals, for an ideal, as I said before, is an aspiration, and aspirations can die.

'Hitch your waggon to a star,'

was Emerson's advice, advice that every woman should lay hold of and follow for her public life, no less than for her home life. 'The ideal is not meant to relax, but to brace us for the actual life,' so wrote a great German author.

What would work at its best be without our ideals? Poor, and often inadequate in its execution, yet even that result might not have been reached without an ideal—those who aim at the star may hit the mountain. If, for instance, a woman be engaged amongst the poorest and most ignorant in educational work, her ideal should be as high as if she were teaching the most cultivated; if she be nursing in the sick ward of a workhouse infirmary, she should strive to make that ward a very model of comfort and beauty; if she is holding public meetings she should give of her best to her audience, never talking down to those whom she is addressing, believing in the possibility of some heart and brain

being ready to receive and hold the best that her heart and brain can give. Strong and undimmed must her faith in her ideals remain if she wishes to translate them into practical results, and without them her public life would soon grow arid and even vulgar—and what is so soul-deadening, monotonous—for ideals bear with them, like a devotional life, a refining element, and as such they should be especially dear to a woman's heart.

The German poet, Schiller, in his poem, 'Dignity of Women,' wrote :—

> 'Honour the women, they weave and they twine
> In life upon earth sweet roses divine.'

These 'divine roses' are the ideals which we women should never neglect. If men sometimes lose sight of them in the hard battle of life, the aroma of the woman's ideals should always surround him.

The constant contact with the world may, and can, destroy our ideal, at least it may tend to nip and blight it. The ideal that seems so near and real to the lonely worker in her quiet room, or when she is face to face with Nature, often disappears amidst inharmonious surroundings or the companionship of those who cannot bring

themselves to believe in the unseen—the lower voices of the spirit are shouted down by the clamour of the many voices of the world—but the worker need not neglect her sanctuary, to which she can repair from time to time, and where she can keep the mirror bright, where she may catch Divine reflections. She should be in the world, and yet not of the world, for she will soon recognise that the world deals hardly with ideals. Only think how it regards the great ideal of conduct, 'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you,' or the great ideal of forgiveness, 'Forgive until seventy times seven.' The ways of the world and of many excellent and practical men and women are directly opposed to the working out of such ideals—and yet, would we have them disappear? But in defence of the world I would say that illusions can be sometimes mistaken for ideals, and this the world rightly condemns. An illusion is a false idea inferred from something that actually exists, whilst the ideal is a possibility which may be realised. Thus it is an illusion that we must necessarily be happy if we start in life with fortunate or brilliant prospects.

Home life can be ennobled by an ideal

as much as public life. I wonder how many women workers have seen their cherished ideal of home life realised? That ideal might be adapted to some of the exigencies of modern life, for there is no doubt that the position of women is altering so much that the hard-and-fast ideals of our grandmothers are not sufficiently elastic for our needs; monotony of existence and its attendant evils were not much regarded in their days—women were not encouraged to think for themselves on any subject outside the home, whereas now the modern ideal would certainly embrace the happiness and progress of the race as well as of the family. A woman may now dream of an atmosphere of exceeding peace which is not stagnation; of discussion conducted with perfect freedom; of that rare delicacy in speech which knows when and how to refrain; of an intimacy that never degenerates into vulgar familiarity; of reserve that never leads to chill indifference; of complete harmony of purpose that yet admits of unimpaired individuality. Such an ideal of home life is not an illusion, and can be realised, not only in married life, but in other aspects of home life. Of course, the highest and most complete ideal of home life is that of a perfect married life

—perhaps that subject may almost be too sacred to be dwelt upon in so cursory a manner.

Many women have a noble ideal of doing good, as they would call it, to numbers, and find it very difficult to do good to one man, and not evil, all the days of their lives. I think the difficulty lies in the fact that good must in the latter case be done unconsciously and without fuss, through influence or atmosphere. Wives should not talk too much of their ideals to their husbands, they should never bore them—talking of ideals almost means shattering them, they seem to grow and flourish when they are cherished in silence. The restlessness of modern life seems occasionally to be at variance with the peaceful ideal of a perfect home life, which for perfection demands such qualities as unselfishness, patience, forbearance, gentleness, cheerfulness, and justice. I lay very great stress upon cheerfulness—the source of an even good humour, of those bright happy spirits which are the wings which carry us over the difficulties and troubles of life. But justice is the rarest, as it demands such an evenly balanced mind. The modern woman may rejoice that her ideal of a perfect home life need in no way clash with

that of a perfect life spent for the public good. I think one might grow out of the other.

'The world waits for help,'

wrote Mrs. Browning :—

'Beloved, let us love so well,
Our work shall still be better for our love,
And still our love be sweeter for our work.'

A sense of harmony and the conviction of a deep, abiding affection in home life prove the best guarantee for a life of outside usefulness. Thus the one ideal should do double work. And I repeat, let us cherish our ideals, they are very precious possessions. As the boy builds the employment of his manhood out of the shifting sand, as the girl sees her future home in her doll's house, so does the true wife, according to Ruskin, carry her true home with her :—

'The stars only may be over her head, the glowworm in the night-cold grass may be the only fire at her foot, but home is yet wherever she is; and for a noble woman it stretches far round her, better than ceiled with cedar or painted with vermilion, shedding its quiet light far for those who elsewhere were homeless.'

And this is another reason why we should cherish our ideals; they shed not

only a quiet, but also an inspiring 'light for those who elsewhere were homeless.'

They can be contagious. There are many who go through life without ideals at all, whose eyes are so fixed upon earth that they cannot see the stars above them—to whom the word ideal has a foreign or unmeaning sound. Perhaps as children they may have been laughed out of their ideals, but deep down in the human heart there is surely some aspiration for the highest and the best of which each one is capable, and that aspiration may become strong and active when brought into contact with another's ideals. The wandering tramp, peering at night through the unshuttered window of a peaceful, quiet home, may suddenly awaken to a longing for a life of honest employment as the thoughtless, restless woman of Society may be stirred to the depths of her being by a glance through the unshuttered windows of some pure and noble soul.

Perhaps you may think that I have wandered far from our Conference and our women's work in these few words on ideals, but this very Union was once an ideal in somebody's brain. How the founders must have wondered whether such a dream could

be realised ! A dream of organized woman's work ! They must have had a premonition of the help that those gatherings would be to the individual woman as well as to her work ; they must have known that workers were there, scattered throughout the kingdom, and that the work was there to their hand. They must have felt, and felt rightly, 'Ah! if only some ideal form of union could be effected, some ideal meeting-point devised !' What they had striven for as an ideal has become a reality. Our part is to remember that new ideals are still required to carry this movement still farther, just as new fuel is required to sustain the glow of the fire, however carefully lighted.

We have probably learnt through the Union what we might otherwise never have known—that energy can exist with tolerance, that hope can live side by side with the knowledge of evil, that warm and loving sympathy need not be affected by a keen sense of justice. 'Tout comprendre sera tout pardonner.'

Perhaps part of our new ideal should be to increase the knowledge of the laws of cause and effect, so that in time the true authors of evil, and not the victims, should suffer. That in time punishment should

give place to reclamation ; that in time the needs of those who cannot make their voices heard should be recognised by the law-giver ; that in time the weakest things on earth may be considered, even the animals who minister to our existence and our comfort, and who, by our treatment of them, can be made beautifully happy or miserably the reverse.

For we none of us live to ourselves, neither those whose lives are bound by their own four walls, nor those whose work carries them far afield ; our aspirations, our ideals are not for us alone ; jealously must we guard them, carefully must we cherish them, strictly must we live by them, silently must we follow them.

PRISON VISITATION.

An Address delivered at the Glasgow Conference of the N.U.W.W., 1912.

It was in the year 1894 that, at the request of the Home Office, I became one of the visitors of H.M.F. Convict Prison for England and Wales, situated in the town of Aylesbury.

Besides being visitor I became a member of the Board of Management—this Board consisting of seven gentlemen and two ladies. During my many years' experience, I can only recall five Jewish convicts; these were visited regularly by the Rev. A. A. Green, one of the Jewish ministers.

Convicts, I may here state, have sentences of three years and upwards, whilst ordinary prisoners have a shorter term of punishment. If a woman be well-behaved a third of her sentence is cancelled: thus, a three years' sentence would be shortened into one of two years.

In a convict prison there are four different classes of prisoners:

1. Star Class.
2. Intermediate.
3. Recidivist.
4. The Long Sentence Division.

The Star Class, composed of women convicted of their first offence, but not necessarily coming from criminal surroundings, are at work in the kitchen and in the officers' quarters, also in the work-room, but do not mix or work with the others. Of these there are at present many young girl-mothers.

2. The Intermediate are not qualified to be placed with the Stars, but are in a superior class to the Recidivists.

3. The Recidivists really are professional criminals, constantly returning with innumerable sentences; *e.g.* one woman, aged thirty-six, had had 146 sentences.

4. There is also a Long Sentence Division for criminals who have sentences of over ten years. These are generally reduced to seven and a half. They are receiving 2*s.* 6*d.* monthly in excess of what is generally earned by the prisoners, half of which they may expend in such food as they may fancy, supplementing their daily food.

There are also a few, very few, cases of Intermediate sentences.

In the year 1901 an Association of Lady

Visitors of Prisons was formally started, with Sir Evelyn Ruggles Brise as President, and Adeline Duchess of Bedford as Vice-President.

This is, I think, a very valuable organization, extending like a network throughout England, bringing us all into touch with one another. The Association acts as a body under organized direction, the members meeting every two years in Conference, when visitors come from North, South, East, and West, looking upon one another as friends and comrades, consulting, advising, talking over difficulties, also dwelling with some satisfaction upon reforms which they have been instrumental in bringing about, and rejoicing over any encouragement they may have received from the prisoners' improved conduct, both in the prison and upon discharge.

I should like to give you some idea of what a visitor may do :—

From the first, I must tell you that we, the ladies, are allowed free ingress into the cells, and prisoners are granted a private interview whenever desired. It requires on the part of the visitor a certain amount of courage and tact to deal with women who are generally untruthful and often unscrupulous.

Beware, I would tell all prison visitors, of promising that which you may not be able to perform ; beware of showing undue sympathy on the one hand, or indifference on the other ; beware also of betraying physical alarm. I confess to having sinned in some of these directions, and have been told, to my shame, 'No need to be afraid, Ma'am, you are quite safe here.'

People often ask me what can be the subject of my conversations—what can I tell the women ? I generally let the prisoner talk to me, and it is wonderful how much they have to relate. Up in the Infirmary Ward I have sometimes had a real chat, and on one dark winter's day I asked the old women riddles, and told them one or two little stories to amuse them.

But I know by this time that prison visiting is full of difficulties, and that there is in all of us a tendency to give perhaps more attention to an interesting or touching case, at the expense of others less attractive.

A young prisoner, with a gentle manner and nice behaviour, is pleasanter to deal with than a low, dissipated woman of the streets, with her coarse voice and degrading habits ; yet the latter requires our sympathy and

our help in quite as great a degree as the former. Indeed, we must not make favourites.

I generally wear something that may please the eye of these poor women, and should not dress in black, or in old and shabby garments ; and when I take a basket of flowers, which I am allowed to place in the Infirmary or the Chapel, I carry it through the galleries for the convicts to be refreshed by a sight of the blossoms.

Sometimes I go into the cells and sit there talking to the women ; but as there is only one chair, I prefer sending for the prisoner to come and speak to me in the matron's office. I give her a seat, and after having looked at her record, I try and find out the woman's history, which does not always tally with the printed report. Then I ask if she would like me to write news of her to her closest relations—as she is not allowed to write more than one letter *or* to receive one visit during the first six months of her imprisonment. (Now, 1921, reduced to three or even one month.)

I have thus conveyed kindly replies into the prison : words of hope or encouragement, and equally satisfactory tidings from within prison walls to the outside world.

The women will soon trust their visitor when they learn that she always keeps her promises and never minds taking trouble in their behalf.

The convicts are engaged in laundry work and in needlework. They make the officers' dresses, their own prison garments, and what are called 'Liberty clothes.' They also work in the kitchen, bakery, and officers' quarters.

In the prison, we have been the means of introducing some happy innovations and reforms, and, although we are fully alive to the advantages of having men upon the Board of Visitors, we cannot but feel that women are most important in this work. I may mention that many, if not all the reforms, are now being extended to other prisons. Thus we have petitioned for, and have been granted: nightdresses for the convicts throughout the prison, tooth-brushes when asked for, list shoes to be worn in exchange with the ordinary heavy boots, and sundry reforms in the liberty dress. A greater variety of work has been introduced: gardening and out-of-door work; white bread is given in lieu of brown, which the convicts constantly returned; greater care is bestowed upon the food; a qualified trained nurse is

established in the Infirmary—this at the special instance of the Lady Visitors; and more readable and newer books are provided for the library. Plain, instead of fluted glass windows are being placed in all the cells, and chairs with backs to them, instead of stools—a very great boon.

There is an excellent prison library, containing really interesting literature, and new books are added each year.

Passing events are not often dealt with in prison talks, but the death of the great and good Queen Victoria was, of course, an exception. I am glad to be able to testify to some feeling of loyalty amongst those who have so often rebelled against authority.

After the death of Queen Victoria, the visitor was surprised to find that a number of women were wearing small bows of black material on their gowns. The explanation was simple: Boot-laces had been called into requisition to represent Court mourning; and the punishment, thank God! had been withheld for damaging prison property. This small anecdote was repeated to His late Majesty by the visitor, and the King was evidently much moved.

The after-care of the prisoners demands very careful and judicious handling. It is

efficiently undertaken by the Duchess in all cases where this is possible. And my colleague brings a vast amount of experience to bear upon the matter.

When the prisoner is well-behaved she is allowed to lose four months in every year out of her prison term, and the last nine months of her sentence she can, under certain conditions, complete outside prison walls, in a Refuge licensed by Government. (This, of course, would depend upon her age.)

When the woman is young—under thirty—she is frequently placed in one of the Homes, with which the Duchess is in close touch, and which the prisoner leaves as a free woman, to begin, generally in service, her new life. But, when she is of middle-age and accustomed to a long spell of prison existence ; when she is of a reckless nature, and an easy victim to intemperance, then the difficulties of her future life increase alarmingly, and the stock of patience, hope, and faith that her visitor possesses, may become heavily taxed.

When a prisoner leaves at the end of her full sentence, she may require assistance of another sort ; a letter to a clergyman, or the secretary of a charitable agency, or to rela-

tions and friends; sometimes a gift of money towards setting her up in business, buying a sewing-machine, &c.

I am allowed to organize one concert, and occasionally a lecture, during the year, which may be attended by all the inmates of the different buildings, as well as by the staff. It is an interesting sight, although a sad one, and it is very curious to watch how, and in what way, music, songs and words, may affect those emotional and often uncontrollable natures.

The Duchess is President of the Ladies' Committee and Vice-President of the Association of Lady Visitors. As such, she does not lay down hard and fast rules for our guidance, knowing how precious the gift of individuality can be, and how important it is that each visitor should feel untrammelled in her efforts. But her hints, suggestions, and advice fall on no unheeding ears, and much is gained from this friendly intercourse.

In regard to the work of reclamation, in which the prison visitors are allowed to have the honour of taking share, I think it is a work specially adapted to women. Much has been done since it was inaugurated by Elizabeth Fry, who walked alone, with

courageous step and serene spirit, into such dens as men feared to penetrate, without a proper escort. Much has been done to reclaim the prisoner, but much still remains to be done. No mere theory can be of avail in this work. We must learn our lessons in the school of experience. We must teach the women whom we want to help, often in spite of themselves, that there is no easy road to reclamation ; that their paths will be hard and difficult, if they are to lead to an honest and better life.

In these days of many strange creeds, men and women often hold that sin is only a form of disease ; there may be some truth, but there is certainly not the whole truth, in this assertion.

Sin is not merely the result of inheritance or of environment, which can be effectually cured or eradicated by better conditions of life, or by hospital treatment. Sin, black, hideous, and revolting in itself and in its effects, no respecter of persons, of education, or of environment, must be fought with every weapon that we can lay hold of. It must be fought by the power of the Spirit as well as by the dictums of modern science. And if we leave out the one method, we

shall be as hopelessly at fault as if we neglected the other.

But do not let us be afraid of reform, only let the reform we wish to bring about be the result of earnest thought, of much inquiry, and also of real experience.

The work of visiting the prisoner within our gaols brings us face to face with evil and its sad consequences, and must accentuate to all engaged in this task the beauty of a pure and God-fearing life.

Since this has been written many changes have occurred at Aylesbury. To begin with: the convict women have been removed to a large prison in Liverpool, and the old building has been transformed into a Borstal Institution for girls. There is space for three hundred. The inmates average from sixteen to twenty-one years of age, and their sentences vary from one to three years. The whole system is on totally different lines from what it used to be. The reformatory element is predominant, and much attention is given to out-of-door work: gardening and poultry-keeping, &c.; and to all manner of physical exercises.

I resigned my position on the Board with

the other members in October, 1918. The Duchess of Bedford still remaining Vice-President of the Lady Visitors' Association, and as such taking continued interest in the welfare of convicts and prisoners, being also in close touch with the authorities at the Home Office. But, alas! in April, 1920, the Duchess's useful and beautiful life came to a close on earth, and it will indeed be difficult to find any one equal to her in qualities of soul, of mind and of heart; understanding, sympathetic, and untiring in her work.

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